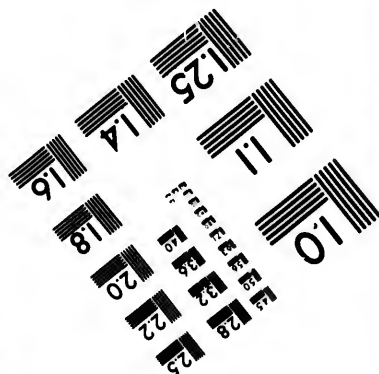
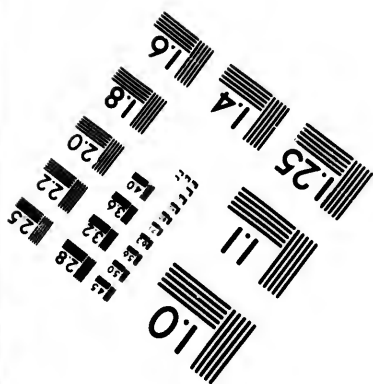
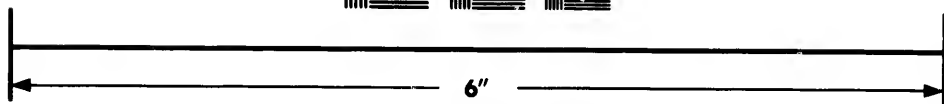
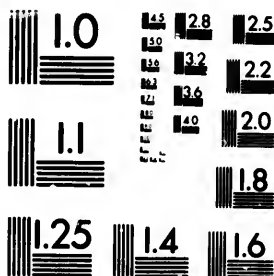


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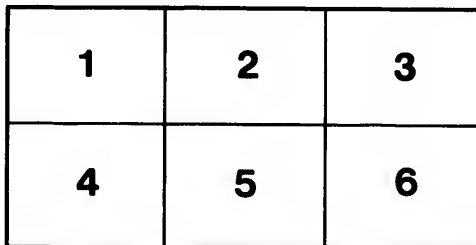
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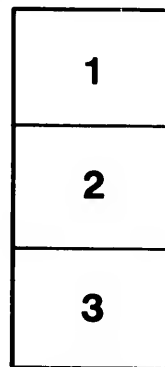
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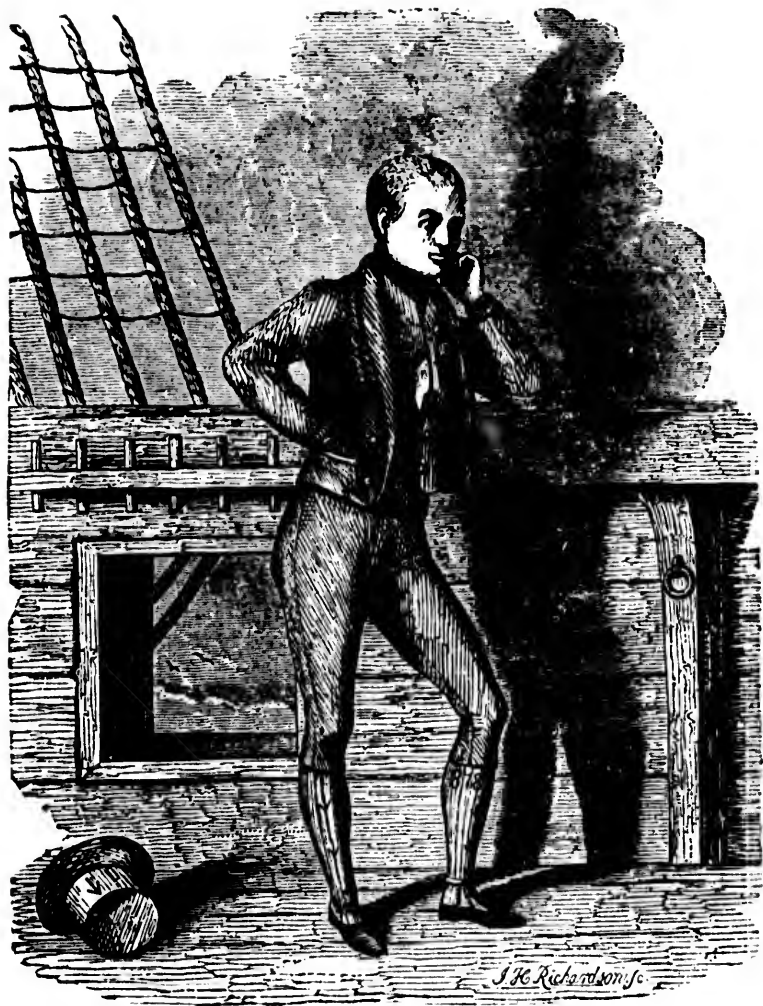
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1844

LETTERS
FROM
VAN DIEMAN'S LAND,
WRITTEN DURING
FOUR YEARS IMPRISONMENT
FOR
POLITICAL OFFENCES
COMMITTED IN
UPPER CANADA.

BY BENJAMIN WAIT.

"It is better to fail in striking for so noble a thing as LIBERTY,
than not to strike at all; for reform never dies."—BACON.

EMBODYING, ALSO, LETTERS DESCRIPTIVE OF PERSONAL APPEALS IN
BEHALF OF HER HUSBAND, AND HIS FELLOW PRISONERS, TO
THE EARL OF DURHAM, HER MAJESTY, AND THE UNITED
LEGISLATURE OF THE CANADAS,

BY MRS. B. WAIT.

BUFFALO:
A. W. WILGUS.
.....
1843.

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1844

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REMARKS FOR THE READER.

As the author of these pages, I would respectfully intimate to the reader, that, at my commencing them, it was wholly foreign to the original plan, to embody any thing farther than the mere incidents attending the commutation of my primary sentence, the transportation to Van Dieman's Land, via England; an account of circumstances coming under my observation, during two years residence there, a description of the face of the country, and a brief history of its discovery, its settlement, the prominent features of its soil, its forests, and its climate; with the character of its government, its inhabitants, its prison discipline, and the treatment the Canadian political offenders have received; with a detail of circumstances in connexion with Mrs. Wait's arduous struggles, given by herself. But, by the repeated urgent requests of many gentlemen, kindly interested, I have been induced to give a brief detail of some of the leading causes of complaint which more directly led to *immediate* insurrection in Upper Canada. For this purpose I have not considered it necessary to go farther back than 1835; and to prevent the possibility of the application of "ex parte" to the statements, (as has been usual, of late, to all publications of such a nature,) I have given nothing but what will be found on the records of the parliament, and in Lord Durham's able report upon Canadian matters. It is, indeed, true, there have many accurate details of our grievances gone forth to the public, that I am sorry to find, are "not generally disseminated," which has been, unhappily, the case with General McCleod's authentic his-

tory of Canadian matters, grievances, and the engagements during the insurrectionary movements; and I would here beg leave to recommend it to the candid perusal of every person who wishes an impartial detail of the causes that led to the revolt, and a relation of facts connected with the unsuccessful struggle.

In respect to the reprehensible conduct of the Earl of Durham, on his first assuming the reins of government, which was so decidedly at variance with the mild and conciliatory policy he subsequently so emphatically urged the British government to pursue towards the North American Colonies, I would remark, that he, in common with most other English noblemen, had suffered his mind to imbibe false impressions of Canada, derogatory to the respectability of the character, honor, education, and intelligence of its inhabitants, by the perusal of such partial statements as we have often found flowing from the pens of the Lieutenant Governor's. For instance, Sir F. B. Head, in an official despatch, describes Canada "as exceeding by only one third, the population of the single parish of Marylebone, in London, and its income does not equal the private fortune of many an English Commoner." "Mechanics, in groups, are seen escaping from it in every direction, as if it were a land of famine and pestilence. Indeed, every expectation for relief from internal industry, is hourly diminishing. She stands like a healthy young tree that has been girdled, with its drooping branches," &c. &c. Indeed, all the sources through which Colonial information *must* proceed, to command credit and attention, had, for many years, been thoroughly poisoned; and all Downing street justice corrupted, to afford opportunity for plundering the Colonial treasures with impunity. For instance, as declared by Lord Ellice, "the trade act imposes duties to an extent quite equal to the amount required for the civil government of both Provinces, *without* consulting with either of the Provincial Legislatures." Again—"Certainly the Canadians complain with apparent reason, against the conduct of this government. For instance, a Receiver General is appointed in England, with insufficient securities; the assembly suggest the regulation of his office; but they are told that this is an encroachment on the prerogatives of the crown. The Receiver fails, in debt to the public \$400,000; and, forsooth, they, (the assembly,) must levy fresh

taxes to meet it. In like manner regarding Sheriffs, two of whom have lately become defaulters, one in the sum of \$108,000 of suitors money. These are not theoretical, but practical evils, that form just grounds of complaint."

The Colonial office incumbent, as a matter of course, expects to nett a good pay for "his short and arbitrary reign;" consequently their Lieutenant Governors, before despatched, are taught well their "mimic parts," and "play into his hand" without dreading consequences; for it is a sacred truth, that among all the Ex-Governors, they who had tyrannised over the poor Canadians with the most "absolute sway," and were the most deserving of impeachment, were sure, on their arrival in England, to have passed in their favor, an act of indemnity, screening them from the errors of their misgovernment. Through these excessively corrupted mediums alone, *all credible* information must come to the people of England, and all applications to Her Majesty, or they will be indignantly rejected. Hence the unaccountable irregularity and prevarication, apparent in all the public accounts, and the governor's positive refusal to lay before the parliament, the books containing them.

We cannot, then, be surprised, to find Lord Durham, arriving from England, in an unfavorable bias of judgment, armed with dictatorial powers, engage in a series of arbitrary acts not at all consistent with equity; yet not altogether illiberal, and in no measure sanguinary, if we rightly consider the political disorder reigning paramount in the country at the time. His first and correct impressions are emphatically developed in the following short extract from his first despatches to the Colonial Minister:

"My sole purpose is, to impress upon your lordship my own conviction, which has been formed by personal experience, that even the best informed persons in England can hardly conceive the disorder or disorganization, which, to a careful enquirer on the spot, is manifest in all things pertaining to government in these Colonies; such words scarcely express the whole truth, not government, merely, but *society itself seems to be dissolved*. The vessel of state is not in great danger, only, but looks like a complete wreck."

The policy this nobleman recommended in his excellent report, is now being pursued in the Canadas with considerable eclat and satisfaction to the people.

But I beg the reader's pardon, as these remarks are growing too lengthy. I will, therefore, at once, introduce him to the consecutive evidences I have before mentioned, which must form the introduction.

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INTRODUCTION.

Previous to entering upon the incontestable evidence I proposed in the prefatory pages, to deduce from authentic documents, I would answer the question so frequently asked, viz: "of what did Canada complain?" and then proceed.

Canada complained of the absence of all security for life and property—of taxation without representation—*of the destruction of the liberty of the press*—of packed juries—of a judiciary bribed by, and entirely dependent upon the crown—of the profligate waste of the public revenues among swarms of foreign officials—of an illegal distribution of the public lands among herds of foreign stock-jobbers, to the injury and degradation of the industrious agriculturists and immigrant—of education for the rich and none for the poor—of a dominant government established church—of an annihilation of the Colonial constitution—of a total want of responsibility in the government party. In a word—of the existence of an arbitrary, arrogant, vindictive, and fraudulent oligarchy, which is now happily exchanged for a more liberal and responsible *experiment*.

EXTRACTS

FROM CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY DOCUMENTS.

The seventh report of the "Committee on Grievances," to the honorable the Commons the House of Assembly, in April, of 1835, says that, "In 1828 a select committee of the House of Commons enquired into the causes of these embarrassments and discontents, which had for many years prevailed in the Canadas. This committee conclude their report by stating their anxiety to record their complete conviction, that neither the suggestions they have presumed to make, nor any other improvement in the laws and institutions of the Canadas, will be attended with the desired effect, unless an impartial, conciliatory, and constitutional form of government be observed in those loyal and important Colonies."

"The almost unlimited extent of the patronage of the Crown, or rather, of the Colonial Minister, for the time being, and his advisers here, together with the abuse of that patronage, are the chief sources of Colonial discontent. Such is the patronage of the Colonial Office, that the granting or withholding of supplies is of no political importance, unless as an indication of the opinion of the country concerning the character of the government, which is conducted upon a system that admits its officers to take and apply the funds of the Colonists without any legislative vote whatever.

"This patronage, as now exercised in the Province, includes the payment of gifts, salaries, pensions, and

See also the report of the Committee on Grievances

retired allowances to the various Clergies and civil officers of the government. The heads of the several departments are all in subordinate stations under them, and hold their situations only during the pleasure of the Crown. It also embraces the judicial establishment, the nomination of one branch of the legislature, the appointment of its speaker and the other officers, the selection of the officers of the House of Assembly, the control of the Indian department—the colleges, the twelve boards of education, and the direction of the expenditure of the public monies in aid of immigration—the selection of the executive council—the uncontrolled management of millions of acres of public lands—the appointment of 1,500 commissioned militia officers—the sole control of the military and naval forces—and the expenditure of a large annual amount of local taxation, by appointing the magistracy during pleasure.

“The Crown also appoints the members of the court of King’s Bench; and the judges of that court regulate, at their discretion, the tariff of fees to be paid therein by suitors. These judges are dependent on the Crown for such retiring pensions as it may see fit to award them, and enabled to look forward with hope and expectation, to the enjoyment of other offices and situations within its gift, by themselves and their families.

“The Canada company, and the several incorporations for banking, canalling, &c., nearly all unite with the local government, and steadily strive to increase the influence of the Crown.

“The Post Office, with its hundred deputies, and contracts, are all under its sole control, while the surplus revenue is transmitted to England. No detailed account of its receipts and expenditures have ever been laid before the Colonial Legislature, though often requested.

“The salaries and emoluments, paid to civil and judicial officers, appointed by the Crown, extend to £50,000, or \$200,000 a year, (exclusive of the clergy grants,) the whole being raised from the people, and not one farthing derived from England.

“The yearly salary of the present Lieutenant Governor, Sir John Colborne, with his other public sources of emolument, is about \$22,524. And his private secretary gets \$3,232. John H. Dunn, receiver general, \$5,776. P. Robinson, surveyor of woods, \$6,884; with all other officers, from the highest to the lowest, receiving salaries in the same proportion.

“Arch Deacon Strachan’s income cannot be easily ascertained. The application of the house to look into the ‘blue book’ or official statement of the pecuniary affairs of the Province, as sent to England, for the years of 1824, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, and 32, the Lieutenant Governor refuses to comply with; and every effort of the committee to obtain the particulars of the Arch Deacon’s income, for a few years back, by questions put to himself, has proved unsuccessful. But as far as we have been able to obtain evidence, he has, since 1826, received \$51,312, which we presume falls far short of the gross amount.

“Within the last eight years, there have been paid to eleven individuals, in the form of pension, out of

the Provincial revenues, but without the consent of the legislature, about \$122,000.

“There were paid out of the Provincial chest, without any vote of the legislature, in 1832, 33, and 34, to the established churches, \$161,764; of which, \$61,136, were paid in 1834; and 23,905 acres of public land have been set apart as glebes to clergymen.

“Accounts of expenditures, for immigration, of \$126,917 70, under the Crown Land Commissioner, the Honorable P. Robinson, have been presented, mostly unattested, and sometimes with evidently false vouchers. These accounts are like others, of Mr. Robinson’s—a specimen of the imperfect mode of accounting for public monies, which prevails in U. C.” This man subsequently became a defaulter to the government in some forty or fifty thousand dollars, but still retained in the governor’s councils, by the power of the “family compact.”

A great cause of complaint, is, the appointment of the sheriffs by the executive, with full power to select all jurors from creatures of his own—the consequence is, packed juries are not unfrequent, which result to the discomfiture of proper justice, when a litigant happens to be branded with the epithet of “radical.”

“Little respect is paid, even in subordinate matters, to the wishes of the house;” and, as peculiarly shown, “by His Excellency, in the measures he adopted for the second Leeds election, at variance with their known wishes. The returning officer, in his evidence, under oath, before the committee, declared Beverly, where the first election was held, to be an unfit place.

It had always been the scene of disgraceful riots, destructive of the freedom of elections, of life and of property, and was in the vicinity of those violent partisans, [Orangemen,] of Messrs. Gowan, [grand master of the Orange lodge,] and Attorney General, who were the authors of the former riots, and remote from the district town where any rioters might be confined. The returning officer was judged, by the committee, under oath, to be destitute of firmness. Yet the same returning officer, and the same place, was selected by Sir John Colborne, for the new election, which was ordered to take place at so short a notice, that it was scarcely possible for the freeholders of the different townships to be apprized. under these circumstances, it is not surprising, that renewed riots occurred at the second election, which has, by another committee, been also set aside," from the same cause as was the first.

"Among other complaints, embraced in the petitions referred to this committee, were the neglect of general education—the delays, costs, and partialities exhibited in the administration of justice—defective jury laws—inconvenient polling places at county elections—an imperfect state of the representation in the House of Assembly—the primogeniture laws—the Crown and Clergy reserves, and the large Provincial debt, which is daily augmenting.

"The legislative council forms a part of the patronage of the British Government; they are the nominees of the Minister of the Colonies, who can add to their numbers at his discretion. In continually rejecting the many valuable measures earnestly prayed for

by the people, they may fairly be presumed to act in obedience to the authorities from whence their power was derived," as their answers, in the examination that took place, plainly show.

"Capital may be carried into any country; but, under an *arbitrary, imprudent, and irresponsible* government, *like this*, it will be impossible to retain a large share of it. Notwithstanding the 'pretended' encouragement given for immigration, the population of the Colony has not increased beyond the natural rate.

"Governors, like other men, are individually liable to all the infirmities of human nature; and in their political capacity, when left without restraint, they, no doubt, sacrifice, occasionally, the interest and happiness of the people, to the gratification of their passions and caprices. They, with the British Ministry, hold the sole dominion of the country, and leave the representative branch of the Legislature powerless and dependant.

"Mr. Stanley, [now Lord Stanley,] in giving his opinion of the executive council, says—"I do, however, think, that something might be done, with great advantage, to give a really responsible character to the executive council, which, at present, is a perfectly anomalous body, hardly recognised by the constitution, and effective, chiefly, as a source of patronage." Its dependance is strikingly manifested by facts stated in the evidence of the Hon. Col. Clark, and the Hon. W. Dickson, members of that body, before a select committee of a late Parliament. It appears that several

legislative counsellors had objected to a measure strongly urged by the executive; and its failure was inevitable. To ensure its passage, coercive measures were adopted; and the members, dependent on the government, were told, either to vote directly contrary to the opinion they had publicly expressed, or be dismissed from their offices. In this manner, any measure might be carried; for, of the twenty-seven counsellors, seventeen hold offices of emolument.

“It appears, therefore, that the legislative council, as at present constituted, has utterly failed, and can never be made to answer the ends for which it was created.

“The opinions of Messrs. Fox, Stanley, Earl Grey, ✓ Lord Erskine, Messrs. Ellice, Hume, Sir James McIntosh, Messrs. O’Connell, Warburton, Laboucher, and many other eminent British statesmen, have been expressed in favor of elective institutions, as the most suitable for the Canadas; and it appears to the committee, that Mr. Stanley correctly describes the legislative councils as being at the root of all the evils complained of in both Provinces. A painful experience has proved how impracticable it is for such a succession of strangers, [Ministers of England,] beneficially to direct and control the affairs of a Province 4000 miles off.

A bill, “popularly called the ‘everlasting salary bill,’ was carried through the house, by the artifice, cunning, and consummate skill of those who felt themselves above responsibility, and spread universal dissatisfaction and discontent. There is nothing in the

country to justify such unconstitutional encroachments upon the privileges of the legislature, and there is no language of censure too strong against it. Yet, it is not of this act, alone, that we complain, though it may serve to illustrate our condition; but the whole system has so long continued, virtually, in the same hands, that it is little better than a family compact. Abuses have grown up so as to be interwoven with every thing; and these abuses are concealed or palliated, excused, and sustained, by those who were interested to uphold them, as the means to retain office, for their private, and not the public good."

The following is an extract from a memorial to the Home Government, subscribed by 30,000 freeholders, and presented by a gentleman who stood high in the esteem of the people.

"He," Sir John Colborne, "came into the country a stranger to the people, their customs and their manners. He found the persons who had guided his predecessor, prepared to advise him. He found Dr. Strachan in possession of the wealth, honors, emoluments, influence, and resources of the Province, while the House of Assembly was neglected, and its remonstrances utterly despised. He found that the government was carried on without any supplies, and that the policy of England's rules, in these days, was to conciliate the people, be as moderate as possible, but trust the people with nothing—keep them powerless and obedient."

"There is no one public individual who has been more honored, caressed, and promoted to greater

wealth, influence, and distinction, by the British government, than Dr. Strachan," "and there is not one who has done more to wean the affections of the people from British rule, and to impress upon their minds the senso of British injustice" and misrule. "He is an executive counsellor, a legislative counsellor, president of the college, and member of its council; a civil magistrate, rector of York, missionary to the society for promoting Christian knowledge, member of the land council, president of the board of education, senior member of the boards of education in eleven districts, and a very extensive landholder. He is receiver of the new glebe rents, member of the clergy corporation, one of the principal proprietors of the Upper Canada bank, arch deacon of the church of England, doctor in divinity, a commissioner under the heir and devisee act for proving letters to estates, a trustee of the royal institution," &c. &c. &c.

During the Parliamentary session of 1835, thirty-four bills for public good, originated in and passed the Commons, were rejected by the Legislative Council, and five reserved for his Majesty's pleasure.

So much for the House of 1835; and the following is from the House of 1836—it being the report of a committee to whom was referred the correspondence between his excellency and the late members of the executive council, viz: Messrs. Baldwin, Rolph, and Dunn:

"The committee are deeply convinced of the truth of Lord Glenelg's opinion, that the present is an era of more difficulty and importance than any which has

hitherto occurred in the history of this part of his Majesty's dominions; and not less are they convinced that the difficulty has been increased, instead of being diminished, since the date of Lord Glenelg's despatch. It is at such a crisis, that we are called to the discussion of a question of vital importance to the people of this Province: a question, which, in the opinion of the committee, is no less than this: Whether we have, as we have been taught to believe, a constitution, 'the image and transcript of that of Great Britain,' or have only a mutilated and degraded one.

"The increasing dissatisfaction which has been produced by the mal-administration of our Provincial affairs under Lieut. Governors Gore, Maitland, and Colborne, has been so well known and so general, that even the colonial office seems to have been awakened to a sense of the necessity of meliorating our condition, by holding out the encouraging prospects of relief and reform. * * * * *

"The country was ignorant how much the affairs of the Province had been conducted by the arbitrary will of the Lieutenant Governor himself, with no other counsel than the secret suggestions of unsworn, irresponsible, and unknown advisers.

"Much and justly as the people of the Province had been dissatisfied with the condition of our public affairs, they were, nevertheless, not aware of the extent to which the unconstitutional proceedings of the Lieut. Governor of this Province had been carried, until recently.

“Every day, however, discovers new causes of complaint on the one hand, and the contemptuous indifference with which all complaints are regarded, on the other.

“Your committee were forced to believe, that the appointment of the new counsellors was a direct maneuver to gain credit with the country for liberal feelings and intention, where none really existed; for it was notorious, that his Excellency had really given his confidence to, and was acting under the influence of secret and unsworn advisers. Under these circumstances, the council seems to have been led, (in conformity to suggestions of his Excellency himself,) to examine the nature and extent of their duties under the constitutional act; and having discussed the subject with his Excellency at the council board, they united, ten days afterwards, in an unanimous and respectful representation, in writing, in which they advert to the critical state of affairs, and the general discontent with past administration.

“The Council placed their duties on the most moderate scale, and only proposed that the affairs of the Province should be submitted for their advice, before the Governor exercised his discretionary power upon them. Yet this simple proposition, in the opinion of the committee, so reasonable to a candid, and so acceptable to a *well constituted mind*, is repelled by his Excellency, with seeming indignation; and the counsellors, in a most arbitrary manner, coerced from their office; and after their resignation, literally traduced. Upon such official conduct, (whatever the station from

which it comes,) the committee cannot forbear freely to animadvert; for the country will look in vain for talented and honorable men, to fill the government stations, and aid the conduct of government officers, if subjected to ignominy and reproach, without vindication by the representatives of the people, whose highest interests, in the King's councils, they have undertaken to serve."

Sir Francis B. Head, in a letter to the council, says, "should they be of opinion that the oath they have taken requires them to retire from his confidence, rather than from the principles they have avowed, they will, on no account, hesitate to do so."

To which Mr. Baldwin nobly observed, "I could not, for a moment, hesitate, when the alternative presented to me was, either the abandonment of my principles, or my place."

"The committee cannot hesitate to remark, that this proposition of Sir F. B. Head, in the secret council chamber, to retain them in his service, if they would retire from their principles, was highly objectionable, derogatory to the honor of the King, and demoralizing to the community."

In his Excellency's description of the infant state of the Colony, "he appears to have had, in his 'mind's eye,' the fable of the frog and the ox. and the committee are led to the conclusion, from a careful observation of things, that the policy, apparently intended to be pursued by the present head of our government, and that of Rehoboam, as recorded in the 12th chapter of the first book of Kings, to be very similar.

“If all our local governors were impeached, and all their estates confiscated, it would not repair the injuries of the most notorious nature, besides thousands of just complaints, murmured only in secret, and endured with patience, because the remedy proposed would be worse than the injury; or because, what is notoriously true, to prefer a complaint, however just, against a governor, insures a black mark to the name, as a troublesome, factious, or undeserving man, whose future hopes are blasted, while his oppressions are multiplied, every favorable opportunity, in various ways, that elude all proof and conviction. What could be done to redeem the injustice against Gourley, the late Robert Randall, Judge Willis, Francis Collins, (who was a martyr for maintaining the liberty of the press,) and many others of the same class? “Your committee, therefore, deny the all sufficiency of the Governor’s liability to impeachment, for mismanagement of our affairs,” for various enumerated reasons, for a detail of which, I cannot afford space. An extract from one, however, is as follows: “For it would be in vain to proceed against the executive authorities for the erection of the fifty-seven rectories, and certain corrupt exchanges of lands, although opposed to the well known wishes and interest of a vast majority of the religious community. *If the only means of PREVENTING wrong being done*, was founded on an institution of an impeachment *for it, after it was done*, before a patron of the wrong doer, four thousand miles off, defended by a person entrenched in power here, and sustained at home by family connexions, and the pre-

ervation of what is called the Colonial system, our condition must be desperate. The House of Assembly, of Lower Canada, instituted a complaint against Lord Aylmer, in a most solemn manner, and with great unanimity, for most arbitrary and unconstitutional misgovernment; but it only ended in his promotion to a higher post of honor. Therefore, although an impeachment might be resorted to, in extreme cases, yet, it by no means supercedes the necessity of all local and constitutional checks, calculated to prevent cause for so difficult, painful, and undesirable a course."

Further: "Because there are such changes of Colonial ministers, that there might be half a dozen in succession, before a suit could be conducted to a conclusion. For instance, Mr. Gale, who gave such evidence before the Canada committee, as to oblige the Right Honorable Mr. Spring Rice, to pronounce him unfit for any office of trust, was appointed a judge by Governor Aylmer, whose partisan he had been. Mr. Rice, who had, in the mean time, been appointed Colonial Secretary, refused to confirm his appointment. He was soon after succeeded by Lord Aberdeen, who allowed the appointment; and Mr. Gale now sits upon the bench, although Mr. Rice, again, in 1835, (when he was once more in the secretary's office,) denounced him as an unfit and improper person to occupy that station.

"Your committee find the same doing, by one minister, and undoing by another, in our own Province; which is, unhappily, misgoverned, by the same policy, and under the same constitutional act. For instance,

the late Attorney and Solicitor Generals, were dismissed for mal-practice, by Lord Goderich; but no sooner was he succeeded by Lord Stanley, than his decision, in favor of the rights and liberties of the people, was, by the latter, cancelled, and the Solicitor put back again into office, to the great dissatisfaction of the country; and the Attorney General sent as Chief Justice to Newfoundland, to create new scenes of trouble and dissension there."

And also, "Because, when, in 1831, his Majesty suggested a further provision for the civil list, which the Colonial Minister required to be made, for a *term of years*, or, for the *life of the King*, the terms of the proposition were not candidly submitted to the House of Assembly; but were suppressed, for the purpose of securing a *keen bargain*; and for his boasted adroitness in managing it, his late excellency was officially commended. His undue and unworthy concealment was practiced with the aid of the executive influence, to carry a measure injurious to the constitutional liberties of the people; but the uselessness of any complaint against a government for such unworthy policy, is apparent, when we see, as in this case, that such liberal institutions are violated, and the mischief accomplished with impunity, although it merits disgrace."

Lastly, "Because, the pretended responsibility to Downing street, has been in full operation for nearly half a century; and we have, therefore, against its sufficiency, the uniform testimony afforded by one misgovernment, during nearly the whole of that period.

By this system, we have been stripped of the public resources, and reduced to our present bankrupt condition; and having thus suffered in the past, we cannot look for better for the future, if we submit to the continuance of the same system of speculation that has brought such a visitation upon us.

From documents relative to the endowment of the fifty-seven rectories, or parsonages, "according to the established church of England," "It appears they have been constituted, in this Province, within the past year, by the government, under the great seal of the Province; and have been endowed, out of the clergy reserves, to the amount of 24,425 acres of valuable land, chiefly in old townships, and in some cases, within towns. To these rectories, or parsonages ministers have been, or are to be presented, as are their successors in future, by the government; and they are, according to the thirty-ninth section of the act, 'to hold and enjoy the same, and all rights, profits, and emoluments thereunto belonging are granted, as fully and amply, and in the same manner, and on the same terms and conditions, and liable to the performance of the same duties as the encumbent of a parsonage, or rectory, in England;' and the next clause provides for exercise of 'spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority,' 'according to the laws and canons of the Church of England;' under which clause, of course, ecclesiastical courts will be established, as no others can fully exercise such 'spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction.'"

“According to the act, the government may endow such parsonages ‘from time to time.’ So that, if the bold experiment succeeds, which is now attempted, we may expect that the present parsonages will receive greater endowments; and that the number of these parsonages will be multiplied amongst us beyond all present calculation.

“It further appears, that different clergymen of the church of England, for private property they have surrendered, consisting of 205 acres of land, with two dwellings, have received, in exchange, 5238 acres of us good, and in many cases, better land. Admiral Van Sittart, astonishing to say, must also share these good things, for the benefit of the church; and for about twenty-nine acres of land, lying in laid out towns, (which however, are uncleared yet, and may be, some fifty years hence,) receives 3690 acres of valuable land.

“All these endowments, and all these grants of land, are in addition to the large regular allowance that is annually paid to them by the government, out of public moneys of the Province, without the knowledge or consent of the people, or their representatives.

“All comment upon such transactions, is superfluous. And it is with difficulty the committee suppress the strong feelings of disgust, indignation, and astonishment, which these practices and proceedings of the government are calculated to excite.

“Year after year have the people of this Province, and their representatives, been straining every nerve, to procure the appropriation of the clergy reserves to

some useful public purpose, in which all his Majesty's subjects might impartially participate. Year after year have they solemnly and indignantly protested against the establishment of any state church in this Province. The people, indiscriminately, and in public bodies, from one end of the Province to the other, have again and again, petitioned the Provincial Parliament, the King and Imperial Parliament, vainly on the subject.

"In fact, all denominations have been agreed on this subject, and remained in a perfect unanimity and perseverance really surprising. And so has the House, when either party predominated, or had the ascendancy, showing plainly that it was not merely a party attempt.

"To establish and endow these rectories, in opposition to these representations, was as flagrant a violation of good faith as can well be imagined.

"In Lord Glenelg's instructions to his Excellency, it is distinctly intimated, that the disposal and appropriation of the clergy reserves are to be left, for the present, at least, to the Legislature of the Province."

A few seasons more of as favorable pickings, and the clergy reserves, (which comprise one seventh of the whole Province, and are always situated in the best parts,) will not be worth the asking, let alone the contending for.

Relative to the resignation of the council, who were forced to that step, as was before seen, "It is, to the committee, a matter of profound regret, that, when his Excellency was surrounded by the late council, with

every means of conducting his administration in a manner efficient and satisfactory, calculated to allay all existing discontent, and preserve the peace, welfare, and good government of the Province, he should so hastily, rashly, and wantonly disappoint public expectation, and fill the Province with greater distress and apprehension than even prevailed from the alien question. No alternative, therefore, remains to the House, but to abandon their privileges and honor, and to betray their duties and the rights of the people, or to withhold the supplies—or all that has been done will be deemed an idle bravado, contemptible in itself, and disgraceful to the House. Your committee, therefore, distinctly recommend to your Honorable House, to withhold the annual supplies; for we would again state, in illustration of the alleged sufficiency of Downing street responsibility by Governors, it appears that an outrage is first perpetrated, and then executive authority, influence, and power exerted to prevent investigation. Nor is this all; for they further try to poison what justice might be expected from his Majesty, by calumniating despatches, traduceing, as factious, the assembly," who endeavor to withstand their flagrant wrongs.

The following is the close of a memorial to the British Commons, to which was appended the report from which the foregoing extracts are taken.

"It is with pain, disappointment and humiliation, we notice the reiterated declaration of his Excellency to conduct our affairs, without the advice of the Executive Council, according to his own will and pleasure, which his public acts have already proved to be arbitrary and vindictive. And this view of his own sole ministe-

rial power and authority with a nominal responsibility to Downing street, he has sustained before the public by mis-statements and misrepresentations so palpably opposed to candor and truth, as to destroy all hopes of further justice from his government; all which is more fully set forth in the documents appended hereto. Since the resignation of the late council, his Excellency has formed another, composed of Robert Baldwin Sullivan, Esquire, and the Honorable William Allan, Augustus Baldwin, and John Elmsley; neither enjoying nor entitled to the political confidence of the people or their representatives. Upon the formation of this council, although R. B. Sullivan, Esquire, was sworn in and appeared before the public as senior counsellor, upon whom, in the event of the death or absence of his Excellency, might devolve the administration of the government, yet a secret agreement was entered into, written in the Council Chamber by his Excellency himself, by which was to be defeated the apparent succession of the senior counsellor to the administration of the government. This arrangement was denied by his Excellency to us in his answer to our address on the subject; while on the other hand the facts so denied are proved by the testimony of R. B. Sullivan, Esquire, and the Honorable captain Baldwin, both of whom are still retained by his Excellency in the council. For other instances of his deviation from candor and truth, as well as his utter unacquaintance with the nature of our constitution and the mode in which it should be administered, we refer to the appended documents, wherein are also detailed other grievances of an urgent and serious nature; to all of which we humbly pray the serious, speedy and impartial attention of your Honorable House. Being denied the beneficial and constitutional operation of our local institutions for the management of our local affairs; being threatened with the exercise of the unadvised, arbitrary government of his Excellency, virtually irresponsible, and being satisfied that nothing but an open, entire and honorable abandonment of this policy, equally unconstitutional and pernicious, will ever restore our peace, welfare and good government, we have, in justice to the people, whose civil and religious interests we are solemnly bound fearlessly to vindicate, been obliged as a last resort, to stop (most reluctantly)

the supplies, and for the attainment of redress in these and other matters contained in the appended report, we pray the aid of your Honorable House.

And as by inclination and by duty we are led and bound to do, we shall ever pray.

MARSHALL S. BIDWELL, *Speaker*.

*Commons House of Assembly, }
18th April, 1836."* }

The foregoing extracts are given as I find them; and although they are but a small portion of the grievances complained of, yet they will go farther as convincing evidence, than all I could compile from sources published in any other form.

As will be seen by the last memorial, the supplies were withheld; but to render this attempt to obtain responsibility void, the willy and Quixotic governor dissolved the House. Determined on putting down the Liberal Party, at all hazards, let the means be right or wrong.

He knew he possessed ample resources, and with the aid of his irresponsible officers; the club law exercised by the Orange faction, and the inflammable material in the country, which he could "ignite by silver and land," he hoped to carry the election for a new House; when assisted by it, with a mock legislature and nominal executive; he would, of course, feel no restraint upon his insolence, rapacity, and corruption.

"To secure a majority of menial members in this House, to answer his vile purposes, Sir Francis granted 250,000 acres of public land, within the months of April, May, June, and July, exclusive of as much more to the Canada Company; and what these extra-

ordinary and unconstitutional means failed in accomplishing, the Orange shillalals supplied."

Immediately after the termination of the elections, the people, honorably represented by the "Reform Association of Toronto," which included in its acting Executive, the elite of Canadian ability, honor, wealth, and energy, deputed the Hon. Dr. Charles Duncombe, of Burford, to proceed forthwith to England—as is satisfactorily shown by extracts published in the newspapers of the day from minutes of their proceedings.

Agreeable to this commission, the Doctor hastened to London, and lost no time in applying at the Colonial office for an interview; but, although accompanied by Mr. Hume, and others of England's liberals, he found, to his mortification and chagrin, the doors closed, and himself preceded by a confidential delegate from Head, bearing the following private letter:

"TORONTO, July 16, 1836.

"The republican minority of course feel their cause is desperate: and as a last dying struggle, they have, as I understand, been assembling at Toronto, night after night, for the purpose of appealing for assistance to his Majesty's government! Their convocations are so secret that it is impossible for me to know what passes there: but I have been informed they have actually despatched Dr. Duncombe, an American, and rank republican, with complaints of some sort respecting the elections.

"I feel that your Lordship will discountenance this dark, unconstitutional practice of despatching agents from this Province to his Majesty's government, to make secret complaints against the Lieut. Governor, which, of course, is impossible for me to repel."

Upon this despatch being disclosed to the public, Dr. Rolph subsequently "remarked in his place in the Assembly," that,

“If it is a dark and unconstitutional practice to send agents to his Majesty’s government to complain of such official conduct as preceded and attended the late elections—if such conduct is to be approved by the very government from which the people ought to expect and to receive protection—if this co-operation of the Colonial minister is to perpetuate a system abhorrent to every well regulated mind—repugnant to the constitution—subversive of liberty, and based in immorality—the future civil and religious rights of the country are doomed to extinction. Salvation can, in such case, only be expected from the subversion of such a system from its foundation. Unless the evil is now effectually corrected, it will equally infect the future, as it has the past elections. The country must, therefore, remember that this execrable policy is not to be viewed in a speculative, but in a practical point of view. Shall we ever again have a free election? This fearful inquiry must be met by another. Will this execrable policy ever again be put in operation? I answer—it will! The same government, under the same system, will not hesitate to resort to the same means to gain the same ends. They will not blush to call these means “energy,” “moral courage,” and “fore-sight;” “services” worthy of “high and honorable testimony!” By these virtues we are hereafter to be governed! Canada must now make her choice between the manful redress of her grievances, or a lasting submission. It is the preservation or extinction of liberty. Repetition will be held corroboration, and renewed success will harden the workers of iniquity. It is a solemn, but unavoidable alternative. If you recognise these as *virtues*, and desire their transmission to your posterity, you have nothing to *do*; you have only to *suffer*. But if your nobler feelings rise in arms against *such virtues*, and the dire inheritance they will yield to your children and your children’s children—if you value that purity of civil government which is Heaven’s second best gift to man—if this rude blow has not severed your bonds of sympathy from your institutions, civil and religious, and all that endears a people to their country—if liberty shall not, by this deadly outrage, become extinct, but rather rise from the panic, with renewed energy, and a more hallowed zeal—Canadians must nerve themselves with a

fervent patriotic, and a christian spirit, to devise, by all constitutional means, redress for the past, and salvation for the future."

The intrepid Doctor, after finding himself thus thwarted in the object of his mission, boldly appealed to the English public, through the medium of a leading journal. He gave a fair detail of Canadian grievances, and made a full expose of the unjust, unhallowed, and unconstitutional practices of the despotic "Head," in his attempt to pervert the sacred rights of the constitution; and the determination of the Colonial office to palliate his conduct.

This fearless, undaunted movement, brought Glenelg to his senses; and he finally consented to receive the petitions, and the Doctor's evidence in writing, but positively refused an interview. Mr. Duncombe, therefore, hastily drew up, and embodied in a letter, the principal facts he had come to represent. Which evidences, although properly substantiated, did not produce the reprimand or recall of Sir Francis, or instructions for a new election, which every true and liberal man really anticipated, but every movement, by the author of the "bubbles of Bruen," in bringing about the utter ruin of his government, was approved, and even applauded, in a despatch from Glenelg, as follows:

"The King is pleased to acknowledge, with marked approbation, the foresight, energy, and moral courage by which your conduct on this occasion has been distinguished. It is particularly gratifying to me to be the channel of conveying to you this high and honorable testimony of his Majesty's favorable acceptance of your services."

The Doctor having been thus unceremoniously treated, in his mission to London, returned to Canada;

and as a forlorn hope in his struggle for liberty, made out a charge of treason against the Governor, for his unconstitutional interference in the people's franchise. This charge was attested by a long list of irrefragible evidences, and carried into the "partizan house," with a determination to try him, even before his own creatures, though the reformers anticipated no benefit; for it was, (as the ingenious General McCleod observes,) done "with a full knowledge that it was like bringing a thief to trial before a gang of thieves."

It required no stretch of discernment to predict what the fate of this appeal would be. The affair was submitted to a "select committee," most of the members of which were, more or less, interested in the acquittal of Sir Francis, who was their acknowledged head. Their report, as a matter of course, without calling any witnesses, declared "the charge frivolous and vexatious." Thus defeating, in an unparalleled, arbitrary manner, the "last expiring struggle" for reform—the last constitutional effort to impede the torrent of despotism and regal encroachment.

From this failure, and the ashes of their lost hopes, sprung the daring plans of forcing the desired redress; when, those early staunch champions of the sacred rights of freedom, united unanimously in the preparations for the anticipated contest. Who can wonder that such was the effect of Head's vicious, coercive and corrupt policy. And who can be amazed, to find that it had prepared every honest and independent mind for a violent disrapture from the power that sought so strenuously to entail upon *ourselves* and

posterity, unmitigated wretchedness and slavery. It will scarcely be expected that I was an uninterested spectator of these degrading events, for I was one of Canada's sons, born, bred, and rocked in the cradle of liberal principles. She was my own, my native land, and my feelings suffered for every wrong she endured; every continued indignity was a new dagger struck to my own heart. I saw the struggle approaching, and actively engaged, both privately and publicly, in preparations to meet it; and made up my mind to see the cause succeed, or become a willing sacrifice on the shrine of patriotism.

Perhaps my resentment might have been influenced more or less, by a keen sense of my own personal wrongs, which, indeed, were not few nor slight; and still augmented by the unjust persecutions of a government faction, that unrelentingly pursued to ruin my wife's family, for no other crime than having nobly befriended, in a case of urgent necessity, that generous martyr in the cause of truth and justice, the late Major Robert Randall, to whom they afforded an asylum and a hazardous protection from the fangs of an arbitrary compact, until he could be elected by the people to a seat in their Legislature, where he served them faithfully and staunchly for fourteen years of severe toil and arduous labor—where his conduct justly entitled him to the position of "the father of reform;" and the uncompromising friend of pure principles, democratic rights and responsible government. To his patriotic exertions in proceeding to England and representing them there, the Canadians owe their eman-

cipation from the odious "alien law," that would have utterly disfranchised two thirds of their numbers. For years he withstood, almost alone, the overwhelming torrent of vice-royal abuse. He was the butt for the envenomed shafts of "a hundred perjured slaves in the employ of the irresponsible government clique. His fine estates, valued at \$300,000, were the plunder of the partisan firm of Street & Clark, of Bridgewater notoriety; of the Boltons, Sherwoods, Jones's, and the whole "family compact," headed by the Governors themselves.

He stood the test of many a "fiery trial," and emerged with a character and notoriety a thousand fold brighter, and more extended than before. Though ruined in fortune and health yet not in mental energy. A due gratitude for his merits and unbounded integrity, retained him a servant of the people to the close of his eventful life.

His name, with those of the Honorable Captain Mathews, the Honorable Chief Justice Willis, the undaunted, martyred Francis Collins, Esq., and Robert Gourly whose incarceration and exile were inhuman stretches of arbitrary power, have for years, excited the sympathetic feelings and commiseration of every noble and generous heart; while the horrid atrocities exercised towards them have bred an universal hatred, and deep rooted resentment for the faction that produced them. Major Randall was my early patron and friend; and his wrongs, with his examples, influenced my early principles, which were ripened and matured by increasing years and knowledge.

The predilections of my youth were for the law and political life; therefore, my studies, and my attentions were directed thereto, until excessive ambition to progress, and sedentary habits ruined my health, when I was forced to sit down short of the consummation of my hopes. I domesticated, married, and was dragged from the felicity of retirement only by the repeated aggressions, and unhalloved practices, of the despotic Head.

I had held myself fully devoted to whatever measures were announced by our firm representatives; at Toronto—I attended carefully to all the developments of intrigue and deception, practiced by the government, and detected by the indefatigable McKenzie, and his able associates; and felt myself by honor and inclination, pledged to an early participation in the outbreak; for, I was fully convinced, it was the only means left for us to break the bonds of tyranny. At the first intimation of the rising near Toronto, I armed and left my home, at York, on the Grand River, without a regret; all ardeney to mingle in the strife for freedom; and proceeded towards a known point of concentration. Indeed, it was highly necessary for me to be on the move, or, at least, on the “qui vive;” for my well known radical principles, rendered me unsafe at home; while the circumstance of the absence of my wife and child, on a visit at my father’s, sixty miles distant, was, to my high tory neighbors, proof sufficient of a premeditated arrangement. My limits will not permit me to go into a detail; and I will, therefore, merely add, that I arrived in the London

District just in time to witness the unhappy dispersion, when it became necessary for every one to shift for himself. I therefore retraced my steps, which had to be done with the utmost care and vigilance. I travelled mostly by night, and finally arrived on the frontiers, despite the thousand dangers that beset me, after having been twice intercepted—once by Indians, whose chief, a particular friend, let me go, having been attracted by a red rose, the badge of loyalty, which I had providentially picked up and pinned on my cap; and once by a band of drunken volunteer guards, from whom, by a daring manouever, I made a happy escape.

On Christmas eve, *gallantly assisted by patriotic ladies*, I launched an old canoe upon the Niagara, and crossed to the Land of Freedom, from whence I soon found my way to Navy Island, where I partook a cheerful Christmas dinner, beneath the banner of the sister stars. At the evacuation of the place, I proceeded with the meek as far as Concaut, Ohio, where, by the virulence of three seated inward inflammations, caused by confined exposure, I lay, for several weeks, but one remove from the grave, under the charge of the noble and generous minded Dr. Raymond, to whom, with the families of H. Lake, Esq., and the Rev. J. J. Bliss, I would here offer the sincere tribute of a grateful heart.

From Concaut I returned, by stage, to Schlosser, where I happily found my wife and child, who received me almost as one from the dead. In the mean time Sir George Arthur displaced Sir Francis, in Upper Canada; and soon after, the Earl of Durham arr

ved, as Governor General of the Canadas; from whose administration proceedings, scarcely consistent with our future plans, were anticipated. Consequently, twenty-six, all *Canadians*, daring fellows, ready to be sacrificed in the field or on the scaffold, penetrated, doubly armed, without hope of return, to the heart of the enemy's country, surrounded on every side by the regular infantry, lancers, volunteers, and Indians, (where a few Americans came to us,) on a secret mission—the object of which I am not yet at liberty to detail—to which, however, let it suffice that I declare there was nothing in the slightest degree dishonorable or disreputable attached, notwithstanding subsequent surmise and evil report.

After a trifling, successful irruption upon a company of insulting orange lancers, &c. far outnumbering us, whom we took, detained a short time, then dismissed, our little band retreated and dispersed, when a part were captured and sent, with twenty or more of the innocent inhabitants, to a jail, where we were all separately indicted for High Treason, by having appeared “armed with swords, spears, muskets, bayonets, rifles, pistols, and other offensive weapons, against the peace of her Majesty, Victoria, by the grace of God, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, with intent to do her some grievous harm.” On this indictment the gallant Col. Morrow, for whose apprehension a reward of £250 was paid, was hastily tried, found guilty, and murdered on the scaffold, with but a few days granted in which to arrange his worldly affairs. He died like

a man, honored and mourned, a glorious martyr in the cause of truth and the rights of man.

Here I ought to consider this long introduction as closed, and the request of my friends briefly complied with. Yet I must add, that the captured innocent citizens were acquitted; and sixteen of the participators sentenced to death upon the gallows. Thirteen of them, however, received an immediate commutation, while three, Messrs. Chandler, McLeod, and myself, with Beemer, who was soon after added, were reserved for positive execution.

But subsequent particulars will be found at full detail in Mrs. Wait's letters—and my own, which I wrote from Van Dieman's Land, designing to give an ample history; in no anticipation of so soon being enabled to return myself to collect, compile, and arrange them for the public. The readers, I trust, will be lenient in passing over whatever faults they may discover, and humanely charge them to my inexperience in writing for a general perusal.

In reference to the outbreak, I would also add a very few of Lord Durham's most pertinent remarks, before I quit the subject; for his report is held in high reputation by every true Reformer in the Canadas, as giving a very fair representation of the causes that drove us into rebellion.

“The Reformers, at last discovered, that success in the elections, insured them very little practical benefit. For the official party, not being removed, when it failed to command a majority in the Assembly, still continued to wield all the powers of the executive government, to strengthen itself by its patronage, and the influence of the policy of the colonial governor and of the Colo-

mal department at home. By its secure majority in the Legislative Council, it could effectually control the legislative powers of the Assembly."

The then existing House not at all complying with Sir Francis Head's arbitrary policy, as will be seen by the close of its foregoing memorial,

"He ventured upon a dissolution, when he thought the public mind completely ripe, and it completely answered his expectations; [to ensure a perfectly menial Assembly:] the Crown made itself a party in the electioneering contests; the result was the return of a very large majority hostile, in politics to the late assembly * * * carried, in many instances, not only by an unscrupulous influence of the government, but by a display of violence on the part of the tories, who were emboldened by the countenance afforded to them by the authorities.

"It cannot, then, be a matter of surprise, that such facts and such impressions produced in the country an exasperation and a despair of good government, which extended far beyond those who had actually been defeated at the polls. For there was nothing in the use which the leaders of the Assembly made of their power, to soften the discontent excited by their [unconstitutional] mode of obtaining it.

"It was the prevalence of a general dissatisfaction, that emboldened the parties who instigated the insurrection, to subvert existing institutions, or change the connection with Great Britain.

"It certainly appeared too much as if the rebellion had been purposely invited by the government, and the unfortunate men who took part in it, deliberately drawn into a trap, by those who subsequently inflicted so severe a punishment on them for their error. It seemed, too, as if the dominant party made use of the occasion afforded it by the real guilt of a few desperate and imprudent men, in order to persecute or disable the whole body of their political opponents. A great number of perfectly innocent individuals were thrown into prison, and suffered in person, property, and character. The whole body of Reformers were subjected to suspicion, and to harassing proceedings, instituted by magistrates whose political leanings were notoriously adverse to them. Several laws

were passed, under color of which individuals very generally esteemed, were punished without any form of trial.

“The two persons who suffered the extreme penalty of the law unfortunately engaged a great share of the public sympathy; their pardon had been solicited in petitions signed, it is generally asserted, by no less than 30,000 of their countrymen.”

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TO

THADDEUS SMITH, ESQUIRE,

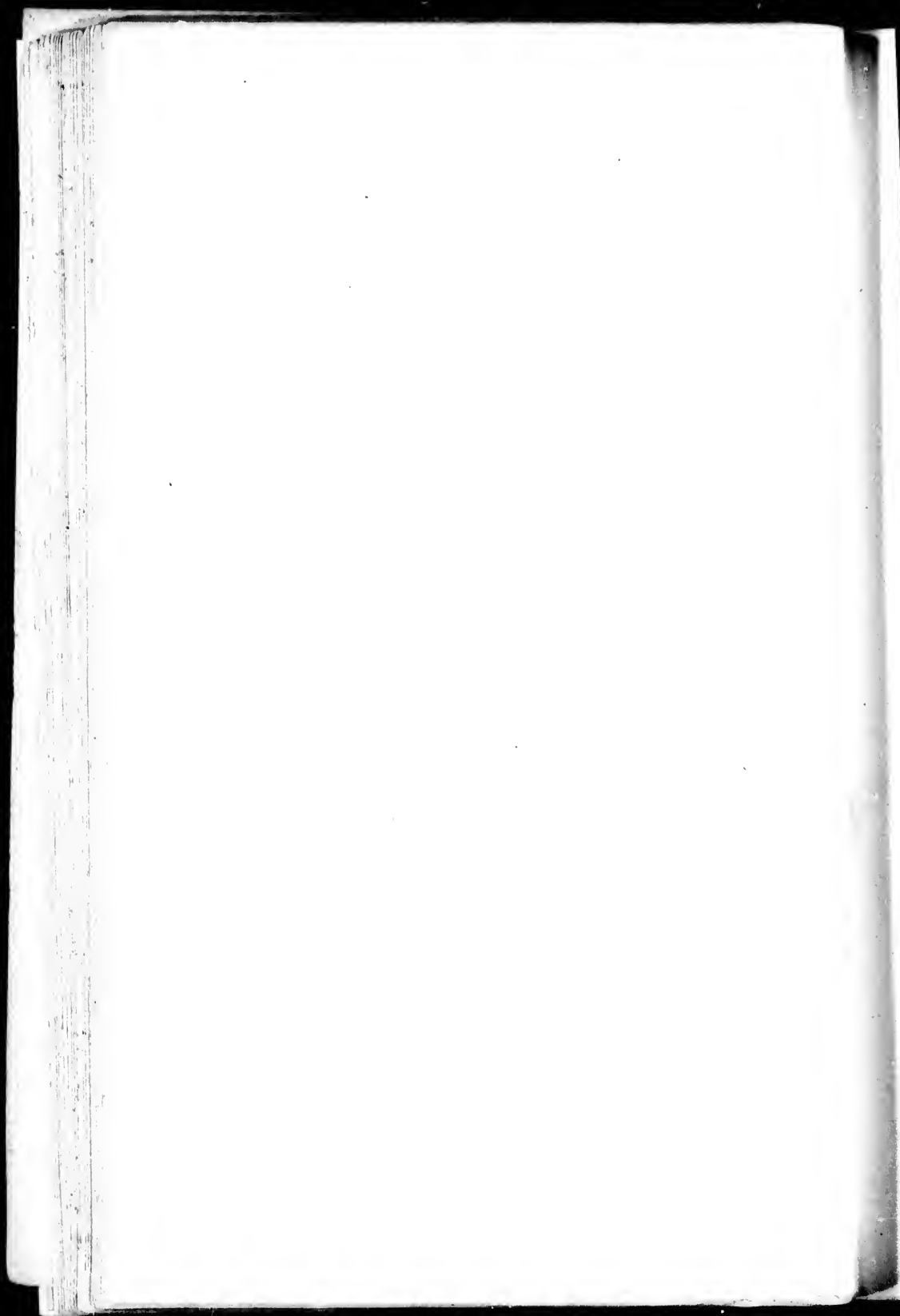
OF CANADA WEST,

These pages are respectfully inscribed, as a slight token of regard due him; for the more than fraternal generosity extended to his family, during the captivity of

THE AUTHOR.

“Though sacred the tie that our country entwineth,
And dear to the heart her remembrance remains;
Yet dark is that tie when no LIBERTY shineth,
And *sad* the remembrance where SLAVERY stains.”

MOORE.



LETTERS
FROM
VAN DIEMAN'S LAND.

LETTER I.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, Van Dieman's Land,
March, 1840.

To — — —,

My very kind friend: It is truly with sensations of grateful pleasure, that I endeavor to reply to your sympathetic letter, which has but just reached me, though written six months since. Had it arrived one week earlier, the delight it has created would have been far more enhanced; but now it has been preceded by one from the intrepid partner of my sorrows, dated October, 1839, breathing an affectionate ardor that could not fail to absorb all my former pain and disquietude, while it robs exile of half its bitterness, and renders my heart giddy with gratifying anticipations.

The ruggedness of wild nature, and the asperities of the mass of wretchedness about me, are, through its exhilarating potency, invested with a smile that seems to manifest a general participation in my newly inspired feelings and hopes.

She informs me of her safe arrival in London, and the success she has happily met in having friendship and protection extended to her—while the government appear to view her personal application as “a touching one,” and perhaps, will extend “Royal clemency.” Ought I not to hail this intelligence as a precursor of ulterior happiness, and as sufficient to effectually dispel all bitterness and melancholy forebodings? Indeed I do regard it as having created a bright spot in the misty horizon of my calamitous existence, and as extending my renewed vision through the dark vista of uncertainty, which, till last week, I imagined had irrecoverably immersed all my faculties in a sea of despair. I can assure you that *hope* has brightened so much that I now look forward to a joyful, though it may be remote emancipation, and a reunion with those I *love*. These cheering expectations are greatly augmented, too, since I have proof of there being, also, in “the land of the free and the brave,” generous spirits, who remember with commiseration, the hapless lot of their countrymen, doomed, on these distant shores, to wear the galling chains of British slavery. Oh how kind are such sympathies! They disperse the gloom that shrouds the minds of those, whose dearest ties, whose fondest affections have been rent asunder; whose anticipations of happiness and comfort, of domestic felicity and the enjoyment of public respect are blasted; of those who have been torn from all they deemed worthy of love, by the cruel hand of tyranny—by a despot, whose barbarous purposes, could not be adequately exhibited in the mental agony caused by a coerced

residence on these antipodes, 16,000 miles from home and all that is dear; but every vestige of hope must be crushed, the mind enthralled, and every misery aggravated, by consigning our *persons* to abject servitude; and debased by a similitude to, and connection with the most degraded beings of which the human mind can conceive.

And for what are we thus disgraced? Is it for moral crime, such as has already peopled this remote speck of "Britain's territory," with murderers and felons, whose polluted society must inevitably, exert a contaminating influence over the characters of all, even of the good, who are thrust among them? No, not for crimes of that dye, must the sons of America feel the keen severity of British revenge, that would compel them to acknowledge every capricious, petty minion, a *master*; and exact the most humiliating obeisance from the servant—who, for the slightest dereliction of the duty imposed, or freedom of speech, may be driven in chains on the roads, to supply the place of cattle in carting stone; or be entombed, to dig coal for the benefit of their inhuman task-masters. But it is for the endeavor to redeem the rights and liberties forcibly torn from us, and a just opposition to a continuation of the oppressive, and paralyzing influence of the unchecked avarice and misrule as exercised in our unhappy country by the British Colonial policy. It is, that the spirit of republicanism animated the heart, and nerved the arm in the assertion of the liberty we ought to have enjoyed, that the envenomed arrow must enter our souls and prostrate our faculties.

Glad will I be to comply with your request, in commencing a course of letters, that shall have for their object a detail of occurrences transpiring since, and connected with my imprisonment and transportation, if by any means an opportunity is afforded of transmitting them to America. Although I am fully aware that it will be attended with difficulty and danger; for the system of espionage, so frequently resorted to in our own country, is unremittingly adhered to here; and an exposure of a correspondence, in the least degree derogatory to the honor of any part of the British government, would "bring upon the presumptuous offender, unmitigated severity."

The only course now suggested to me, is through the American shipping, which frequent the port of Hobart-town. I have, in fact, already made use of it as the safest channel through which I could correspond with those in America, to whom I have already written; and I find them, at all applications willing, nay anxious to oblige me in this particular.

My tale, as you anticipate, will be one of thrilling sorrow, misery, and woe, that must excite the tear of sympathy, and the commiseration of every generous heart, with their prayers in behalf of deeply suffering humanity.

I shall, at all times, feel truly happy in receiving letters from yourself or other friends. Yet I am under the necessity of requesting they may not contain any expression offensive to the government; for papers containing such, would never reach the captive. All communications to or from the prison population, are

open to the scrutiny of numerous petty officials, appointed to the *honorable* post of watching occasion to draw into deep punishment, the wretch who feels his suffering already too acute for long endurance.

Your general knowledge of the circumstances leading to the insurrection, and my inducements to take that prominent part in it, which resulted in placing me in the power of the sanguinary Arthur, and ultimately the present unfortunate restraint, entirely supercedes the necessity of my entering minutely into relations anterior to my sentence. Therefore, that ominous event will commence my personal narrative—an incident, I *now* regard with a hundred fold more horror, than when it occurred.

You intimate the propriety, of my entering into details with the minuteness of a diary; but that, I must inform you, is quite out of my power, as all my relevant notes, taken prior to my removal from England, were pillaged simultaneous with all my wearing apparel, books, &c. Perhaps, however, this contemptible stretch of power, as far as relates to the "journal," will rather be conducive of interest than otherwise. For, was I to describe every indignity that I, in common with my fellow *patriots* were constrained to endure, and indulge in the consequent strain of feeling, this correspondence would extend to a very unnecessary length, and assume too much the appearance of egotistical arrogance, while I am sure all the incidents of general interest or importance, are so indelibly impressed upon my memory, that the extinction of life or reason, could alone obliterate them.

Here permit me to remark, that I do not comply with your request so much for the purpose of giving publicity to my individual sufferings, as you propose, in America, as I do with a desire of exposing the system of treachery and consummate barbarity, as practiced towards acknowledged "political offenders," when in their power without the means of redress, by the "self styled" *generous, liberal, and humane* British government.

It may be presumed that my residence here, amid a class of beings who, for crime and obscenity, have scarce a parallel in the world, will afford frequent opportunities for giving many convincing proofs of the utter inefficiency of the present "convict discipline," as adopted in almost every part of the British possessions.

This Island indeed, with truth, may be esteemed the purgatory of England; where prisoners of all classes, without distinction, are compelled to submit to every species of official abuse and despotism; where, while employed by government, the corrodings of hunger are never appeased, and men seldom emerge from the lowest degrees of filthiness, that all know lead almost directly to disease and premature death. When human beings, spotted with every shade of crime, are herded together in masses, forming schools of vice and infamy in no instance surpassed—they are sunk still deeper and deeper into the vortex of degradation and ruin.

In closing this letter I would add, that what I shall relate as having occurred to myself, and within my observation, has also happened to, and in view of all

my countrymen, who, with me, are destined to drag out a disgraced existence, amid thieves and murderers, forlorn outcasts on the "inhospitable shores" of Van Dieman's Land; and therefore, though my tale may be incredible, there cannot exist a doubt of its truth.

I have merely space to say, you may expect to hear from me nearly monthly; and that I feel most grateful in acknowledging your kindness with all manifest interest; and add, I hope the active efforts now being made for my freedom by Mrs. Wait, will equally result in the complete emancipation of all my compatriots from this merciless thralldom.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours, &c. — — —

LETTER II.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

April, 1840.

"You, Benjamin Wait, shall be taken from the court to the place from whence you last came, and there remain until the 25th of August, when, between the hours of 11 and 1, you shall be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, and there hanged by the neck, until you are dead, and your body shall be quartered. The Lord have mercy on your soul!!!"

Such was the horrid sentence passed upon me by Judge Jones, on the 11th August, 1838. It will be supposed that a doom of such ignominious import,

must have made a deep impression upon my mind. But I firmly believe it created a greater, or at least, a more sensible effect upon the crowd of spectators, (for the house was literally crammed,) than within my breast; for I was prepared for the event, and fully persuaded that it would take place, despite the jury's recommendation to mercy, which was special, or the motion of my very able and active counsel, (Mr. Alexander Stewart,) to arrest the verdict, on the ground of an illegal jury; the foreman, (Mr. Wragg,) being an alien, irrevocably so, by especial act of Parliament. In fact, I should have been much disappointed, (though I must say, happily so,) if an arrest of verdict had been ruled; for on the day of my arrival in the jail of Niagara, I was informed by a gentleman high in government esteem, that I was "a man marked by an exasperated governor, as a fit subject to wreak his utmost vengeance upon;" and had I felt even a *hope* of favor, or that my case would not be regarded a desperate one, it would have been effectually dispelled by Sir George himself, who, (at the close of an interview in which he offered a free pardon and emolument, if I would give information of the combination, he knew existed in the country, for the subversion of the government, by which he hoped to obtain more subjects for "retributive justice,") said, "for your obstinacy, in refusing to make reparation to the country for the injury you have done it, you shall feel the rigor of that power you affect to despise, and be *hung* despite every effort to the contrary. Yes," said he, with the tremor of passion on his lip, "though the Province rise en masse,

and beg it, you shall receive no favor from me." By such passionate threats, he had hoped to make my spirit quail beneath his *mighty* power, and force the desired information from me. But they were vain; and all I had to return was, that "all the *reparation* in my power, I would make *instantly*; that was, as he considered me a prime instigator, my blood was at his service, if he would deem my execution atonement sufficient for all the others who had been incarcerated for conduct," he "considered me the mover of." Thus, then, these boding menaces, together with the sealed fate of the late Col. Morrow, insured to me the verdict and foregoing sentence, and caused an apathy relative to it, and an indifference, that, at this distant moment, makes me shudder.

But happily for the preservation of my life, and the lives of others, the sanguinary purposes of the Governor were frustrated, much to his chagrin, by the energetic conduct of my affectionate wife, who could not see the husband of her choice sacrificed to a despot's fury, without a struggle to save him. You will remember how fearlessly she overcame the obstacles thrown in her way; and counter to the advice, nay, persuasions, of numerous *self styled* friends, proceeded to Quebec to procure, if possible, an interview with the Earl of Durham, of whom she had no doubt she could obtain a pardon, or at least, a commutation, by the strength of her entreaties—in which effort of generous affection she was deservedly successful. A detail of the obstructions thrown in her way, the difficulties she encountered, her feelings and the occurrences on the

passage to and from Quebec, with her pleadings there, and interview with Sir George on her return, I will give you from her own pen, it being the copy of a letter she wrote a friend subsequent to my being sent from Niagara—a duplicate of which she gave me, when on a visit to me at Kingston—and which, with other of her letters, I have preserved with care, through every vicissitude.

Perhaps the indifference with which I listened to the ominous sentence, induced the authorities to treat me with greater severity than the others; for immediately after “guilty” was said by the foreman of the jury, I was hurried away to the iron bound stone cell, known in the jail as the “condemned cell;” and there locked up, consigned to the solitary musings of my own mind; and debarred from correspondence with my fellow prisoners, except what could pass through a small diamond in the iron door, and almost from the light of heaven. Here, in the hour of loneliness, the idea of my approaching death came over me. My life I never valued; and to sacrifice it in the cause of liberty, truth, and justice, was the end I most desired. I had calmly, in other times, counted the probabilities of such an event, and deemed the offering a voluntary and perchance a necessary one, upon the altar of legitimate rights. But I had never before considered it in connection with the desolation my fate would entail upon my family—or the sad and sorrowful adieus that must be given—the tears and grief of a wife—the bereavement of a dear child—and a separation from the friends of my happy days. The thoughts were bitter,

and created an agony of mind that only gave way to the pure and holy influences of religion, which can alone produce that proper resignation to the Divine will in the last trial of nature, and afford the peace and consolation so requisite to sustain the soul and raise it above the vicissitudes of mortality.

Though Mrs. Wait had left Niagara with a strong hope of success in her mission to Lord Durham, yet I did not for a moment cherish the thought—knowing that his Lordship had, while on a recent visit to Upper Canada, refused to comply with the petitions of many of the inhabitants, and extend to that Province the general amnesty he had proclaimed in Lower Canada; or interfere, at that time, with the administration of the Lieut. Governor—consequently made every preparation in my power for the approaching hour of dissolution; and even when Mrs. Wait returned with the assurance, both from the Governor General and Sir George, that a respite was granted, I felt still incredulous, and up to the latest moment gave no heed to the flatteries of hope; and subsequent discoveries described in Mrs. Wait's letters, will show you that my incredulity was not without foundation, although the sequel did result propitiously.

Previous to my sentence, and subsequent to Mrs. Wait's return from Quebec, she resided near the jail to administer as much as possible to our relief; therefore I suffered nothing from the want of provisions or clothing, but unabated mental distress through the daily prospect of the inhumanity of the jailer, who has driven her from the gratings several times in the

day, lest she might communicate some intelligence unheard by him. By the orders of the Sheriff she has also been detained, at the gate of the yard, and refused admittance by the armed guard, who, with the heart of a dastard, presented a bayonet at her breast and drove her back. These orders were given, as was afterwards stated by sheriff Hamilton, in answer to a request for an explanation, by the Judge on the bench, when she made an appeal to him through my attorney, who said it was "on account of having received information from a James Gordon, that her admittance to the prison would endanger the safety of the prisoners," &c. &c. Such an explanation offered a fine opportunity for Mr. Stewart to exert his talent at satire, which was improved, to the no small amusement of every generous mind present, and annoyance of the Sheriff. An order emanated from the bench at once for her admission to the grates of the prison; still she was subject to the malevolence of the wretch who kept the jail. After the respite was ordered, I made this conduct the subject of a petition to the Lieut. Governor, who ventured no reply until after I was removed to Kingston, when the board of magistrates was called together, and the letter laid before them, without the knowledge of myself or any one friendly person. The consequence was, that, on the testimony of old Wheeler, his son, and the turnkeys, the petition was pronounced a "libel." The result of this meeting of the board, was first communicated to Mrs. Wall by Mr. Macaulay, Private Secretary to Arthur, when she called at Toronto on her way to Kingston, who

appeared highly incensed that such a "false statement should be made against any officer in discharge of his duty." He exhibited the petition to her, as she had heard or seen nothing of it before, when she declared every statement was true; and would appeal to a number of gentlemen of veracity; but nothing farther would be done about it, yet *I* must bear the odium of a "libel."

The 24th regiment was our guard, and was commanded by brevet Major Townsend, rendered famous in the annals of Irish crim. con. by the eloquence of the noted Irish Barrister, — Phillips. He often visited our cells with no other apparent design than to insult us. His arbitrary and cowardly spirit was contemptibly manifested, by refusing Mrs. Wait permission to cross the Niagara River, when I was undergoing an examination at the Ontario House, Niagara Falls. His regiment was afterwards exchanged for the 43d, the character of whose commander, Col. Boothe, formed an exalted contrast to that of his predecessor in charge. The secret is, Boothe was a christian and a soldier, while the other was dissolute and cowardly.

I scarce need remind you that there were sixteen "brave, faithful, and honest men," limited to a life of two weeks, at the same special assize at which I was sentenced—poor Morrow having been executed previous to our arraignment—and soon after three others were added to our number. Of these, thirteen received a commutation of sentence, and were sent away to Fort Henry, at Kingston, on the 21st August, leaving four,

Messrs. Chandler, McLeod, Beemer and myself, for positive execution, and one for mercy. When they were separated from us and manacled for their journey, the scene became replete with sorrow—tears rolled from the eyes of the poor fellows who supposed they were bidding us adieu for ever—the cheeks of manhood were blanched with grief, and there was more dejection in the hearts of those whose lives were to be prolonged in slavery, than among us for whom there was no hope. They parted from us as from dying companions, with whom they had long suffered. One agonizing sensation pervaded every soul, the intensity of which none can have an adequate conception, but those who have felt its saddening influence.

The scenes of my incarceration, trial and sentence, were all enacted within what I might call my native District—consequently intense interest was excited. Petitions for a pardon or commutation were prepared, universally signed, and placed in the hands of my father, who, though feeble from ill health, proceeded, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Johnson, of Drummondville, to Toronto, to lay them before the Governor, whom, they on arrival, were informed, had left the seat of government some days previous, on an excursion through the remote parts of his government—perhaps a visit to Lower Canada—and would not return until after the expiration of the time determined upon for our execution. From Toronto, my father's ill health obliged him to return; but the benevolent Mr. Johnson continued on to Kingston, vainly hoping to meet or hear from Arthur there. He too returned, well con-

vinced that the Governor had designedly left Toronto, at that critical moment, to evade a recurrence of the like appeals in this case, which had given him so much annoyance, and the people so much reason for censure, in the cases of the lamented Lount and Matthews; and the subsequent conduct of his Excellency seems to place such convictions beyond a doubt.

Preparations were making for the final performances, and a Jack Ketch forwarded from Toronto, to do a deed for us he had done for Lount and Mathews. This was a precaution taken by the Sheriff to prevent the necessity of acting himself as executioner, which he did in Morrow's case, after a hundred dollar bribe had failed to induce a black man to act for him. This Jack was kept about the jail, not daring to leave it until it was found there would be no "work in his way," when he was driven from the yard and never after heard of.

The 22d brought Mrs. Wait from Quebec with intelligence of a respite, but no intimation of it had been made at the proper office. She went to Toronto on the following day, but no satisfaction was to be given her there, as you will see by her letter. The final day arrived—the hour came that limited the time—and at last 12½ brought the Sheriff from Kingston, where, after he had delivered the prisoners at Fort Henry, he met the Governor, whom he waited on and inquired "what must be done for the poor men in Niagara, for whom he hoped a respite might be extended?" Sir George detained him until the last boat upward bound for the day, had put off, then gave him

an order. Should he wait until the following day, the hour for our execution would be passed at his peril; and the execution of Morrow had made such an impression upon his mind, that he was glad of the respite, and determined to make an effort to obtain the Governor's boat; in which he was successful after considerable altercation, and succeeded in gaining the Niagara dock at half past twelve, P. M., where the Rev. Mr. Creen met and received the happy tidings, which he communicated to us as soon as possible. It would appear by this elusive conduct of the Governor, that he had determined to execute us at all hazards, and then lay the blame at the door of some of his officials, for he wished it believed that he had left an order for a respite in Toronto; and no doubt, had this ruse succeeded, a despatch charging the blame to some petty official, would have been a full exculpation for him in Downing Street; but his temerity was scarce adequate to this step. The respite extended to six days only, yet it created a complete reversion in my breast; for I had never known but few cases of an execution taking place after a respite had once been granted. So I thought no more of being "hung," but set myself at work vigorously to oppose transportation, which I knew to be illegal.

But I must here close, to give room for Mrs. Wait's communication.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER III.

MRS. WAIT'S APPEAL TO LORD DURHAM.

NIAGARA, U. C., October 15, 1838.

My dear friend,

During the trial of my husband, I had vainly hoped the jury would, as they were inclined, find some technical point on which to hang a plea for acquittal, but with no other reason than the fond desire of an excited and anxious mind. The fatal verdict aroused me from this delusion, and I at once determined to proceed to Quebec, procure, if possible, an interview with the Earl of Durham, and plead with all the energy of an afflicted heart, for the life of him with whose destiny mine was so nearly linked.

Therefore, I set about, with the utmost alacrity, preparing for the arduous duty. On the evening after the sentence of death was pronounced, I communicated to my husband's attorney, my intention of appealing to Lord Durham; but he thought that his Lordship would not interfere with the administration of Sir George Arthur, who would doubtless feel the more exasperated by an appeal to his superior in authority. This, too, was the opinion of all those to whom I had looked for counsel; and even their entreaties were used to prevent my leaving Niagara. They argued, that as the time allotted for my husband to live was short, I had better remain and afford him all the consolation in my power: I had an infant, also, whose life might be endangered, either by speedy travelling, at that season

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of the year, or by being deprived of her natural nourishment, in case I left her; that petitions would assuredly be forwarded to Sir George, and every thing possible done for the unhappy prisoners.

These were the persuasions adduced; but far was it from me to delay, and vainly seek the life of my husband at the blood-stained hands of Arthur, from whom I could not expect even a particle of mercy. My babe was kissed, left with a friend, and committed to the protecting care of Him who ever watches over the orphan and the widow, for even this, we had too much reason to fear, would be our lot, and which, if possible, I was determined to make a desperate effort to prevent. It was considered perfectly useless to entertain the slightest hope for the life, either of Mr. Wait or Mr. Chandler, the former being marked by the Governor, as I was repeatedly told, for the extremity of the law, while the latter, on account of his advanced age, could not possibly expect a commutation. I felt much affected by the fate of Mr. C., on account of his large family, (a wife and ten children) therefore proposed to his eldest daughter, then at Niagara, to accompany me, on behalf of her unfortunate parent; and if we could but get his Lordship to lend an ear to our applications, we need not then fear that the lives of any of the others would be sacrificed, as had been that of the gallant and noble Morrow, who was yet scarce cold in his narrow bed.

Miss C. acceded to my entreaties, provided it would meet the approbation of her father's friends, whom she consulted immediately. They readily assented to

the design, and made out the necessary documents. But soon suggested that two appeals might preclude the possibility of either being effective; consequently, it was urged by them, that his Lordship would more likely be struck with the novelty of a daughter asking for the life of her father, than a wife for that of her husband. This was poor reasoning to me, as I could not trust the life of my husband to the pleadings of any but myself; much less to those of an inexperienced girl of eighteen; although I much admired the filial tenderness which led her to make all the efforts she was capable of, to save her father.

An interest was soon excited, and a subscription taken up to bear the expenses of Miss C. to Quebec, with letters of introduction, and so forth; no kindness, at the same time, being extended to me, in whom the project originated, and who had invited Miss C. to accompany me, although I was nearly penniless, which was known, not being near a friend to whom I might apply for assistance; for, indeed, Mr. Wait's nearest friends, who had come to Niagara for the express purpose of aiding me, were induced to withhold even their *countenance*, by the representations made, that if I acted at all, it would rather be prejudicial than advantageous to my husband, on account of my having, also, excited the enmity of the Government. But yet I did not fear being provided for, in an effort of affectionate duty, such as was then before me, and often since has my heart overflowed with gratitude to God, for the sustaining strength given me at that trying period. I was permitted to see my poor husband for one moment.

that I might bid him adieu 'ere I left. I endeavored to administer consolation, by encouraging a hope in a happy issue of my suit with Lord Durham, if I could but be permitted to reach him; and commending him to the care of our Heavenly Father, I tore myself from him to embark for Quebec.

I had one more painful duty to perform, before I left Niagara, which was to beg of Dr. Porter, the prison surgeon, that in case my husband should be executed before my return, he would endeavor to prevent that part of the horrid sentence which gave his body to dissection, from being carried into effect, and that his remains might be given to his friends for interment. Dr. Porter assured me, that as far as his influence would extend, I need not fear the reverse; and he, though evidently friendly, thought I had better remain, as he feared the Government might rather be exasperated by an application from me, whose political sentiments they had so clearly understood, from certain letters captured with, and taken from the pockets of Mr. Wait. Still I was not to be deterred from my object; confident in the rectitude of my course, I feared no evil; but passing immediately to the place of embarkation, where I found Miss C., with some of her friends, who were there to see her safe on board. James Boulton, Mr. C's. attorney, was to accompany her to Toronto, who had taken occasion to use very ungentlemanly language, in his efforts to persuade me not to think of going, for the above reasons, as well as others. I would ruin the cause of his client, and finally prevent the Government from doing anything for the

“unhappy prisoners,” as he termed them, in mock commiseration; and truly, indeed, would the secret wishes of his unfeeling heart for “those unhappy prisoners,” have been realized, had I listened for a moment to their persuasions, and allowed Miss C. to proceed alone, to lay the case at the feet of Lord D.

Here was also Judge BUTLER, *a descendant of the ROYAL LINE, of Wyoming notoriety.* He, too, “*felt a deep interest* for the success of the mission, and wondered how a woman, who, [as he had been informed,] manifested a good degree of sense on ordinary occasions, could thus be so *mad-brained* as to persist in exciting the still greater fury of the Government, by personally seeking their mercy, despite the advice and opinion of all her *friends,*” as he was pleased to term them. To all of which I had but one reply to make, which was, that the path of duty was before me, from which I would not be driven by any persuasion whatever, and should I have no other friend, I trusted that God would aid me, not only in surmounting the obstacles thus thrown in my way, but finally in accomplishing my purpose. If they thought proper, Miss C. could go in another conveyance, but whether she went or stayed, would make no difference with me.

The bell rang, I stepped on the boat: Mr. Boulton introduced Miss C. to Capt. Richardson, who kindly gave her a passage to Toronto, presented her with four dollars, and a letter of introduction to Capt. Moody, of the St. George; Capt. Richardson not knowing, at the same time, as he told me, on my return, that I

was on board of his boat at all, of which, had he been informed, he would most assuredly have been happy in extending the same kindness to me that he had so generously done to Miss Chandler. The St. George was to sail at nine in the morning, for Kingston. We were on board by half past seven, leaving time to reflect on the sad prospect before me, which agonized still more my mind, already on the verge of distraction. I was now about leaving that part of the country where I might hope to meet a friend or acquaintance, who could assist me on the journey of seven hundred miles, undertaken with scarce sufficient means to accomplish it, much less to return 'ere the die might be cast. As these melancholy reflections crowded themselves upon me, the enquiry arose, might I not find some kind friend to humanity in Toronto, before the sailing hour arrived. I resolved at once, went on shore, and requested direction to the residence of Jesse Ketchum, Esq., a gentleman I well knew by reputation, and whom I had once seen at my father's house, on a visit to the lamented Major Randal.

I saw Mr. K.—told him my circumstances, and the object of my mission. He introduced me to his interesting and accomplished lady, who kindly insisted on my breakfasting with them, as I could hear the bell there, and reach the boat in time.

Mr. K. read a few verses of consolation from the sacred page. I united with them in their morning worship; and grateful indeed, to my agonized heart, was the privilege of thus pouring out my soul to God

in unison with those dear friends, who shed the tear of sympathy with me, and implored the Father of mercies to bestow his gracious blessing. While at breakfast, Mr. K. kindly asked me to accept of ten dollars as an assistant, which I received, as a kindness from heaven. I arose, bade them good morning, and with a heart overflowing with gratitude, proceeded to the boat.

After leaving our moorings, I sent for Capt. Moody, and told him, that as Miss C. and myself were under the necessity of travelling alone, we begged the favor of placing ourselves under his protection. Miss C. presented her letter from Capt. R., which informed him of her peculiar circumstances, and we were both treated with every kindness and attention by the gentlemanly Captain.

On the following morning we arrived at Kingston, and were safely placed on board a small steamer, to descend the St. Lawrence; down which we glided, amid the many picturesque islands, that form a conspicuous feature in its bewitching scenery, but which, to my anxious heart, could convey scarce one pleasing sensation, absorbed as I was, with feelings of so distressing a nature; though they, together with the pleasing conversation of an interesting family from Philadelphia, who were travelling for pleasure, and were very kind in their attentions, served in a measure to alleviate; and I could look around me with, as I supposed, a species of calmness even wonderful to myself. At the head of the Long Sault, we took the stage to Cornwall; and as it was deemed im-

practicable to descend the rapids, we were alternately on water and land, until we reached Montreal. I was much struck with the sameness of the quiet little white-washed houses of the French habitans, which seemed only relieved by the occasional residence of the land owner, called the Seniour, and a catholic cross planted in the ground here and there, generally at cross roads. It was in August; and flowers were visible, in great profusion, in and about those humble dwellings; the sash being thrown open, the window sills were filled with blooming geraniums, and other exotic, as well as domestic plants, which at once displayed a most pleasing sight to the traveller, perfumed the atmosphere with their fragrance, and gave evidence of a refined taste in the cultivators of those beauties of nature.

We reached Montreal at eve, and left immediately, per steam boat, for Sorelle, a small village, formerly called William Henry, and situated on the Sorelle river. This place being the residence of Sir John Colborne, to whose son Miss C. had a letter, asking his influence at Quebec, which she wished to deliver; she requested me to remain there with her until the next boat, to which I acceded, hoping that I also might have an opportunity to obtain the interest of Major Colborne. We accordingly went up to Sir John's. The Major was not at home, but Miss C. left her letter, to call for an answer. I called with her—Major C. came out and gave Miss C. a letter to Col Couper, the aid-de-camp in waiting, upon the Governor General. I begged Miss C. to introduce me; but she decli-

ned, either from excessive bashfulness, or some other reason unknown to me; consequently I was still left without a line of introduction, recommendation, or any thing, save my own determination to effect the object if possible, let the obstacles be what they might.

About nine in the morning we reached Quebec—left our trunks on board, and proceeded immediately to the Castle St. Louis, then the residence of Lord Durham. We enquired the way to the receiving room, and requested to see Col. Couper, who soon made his appearance; upon which Miss C. presented her letter, while I told Col. C. that, although I had not been so fortunate as to bring letters of introduction, yet I had come to memorialize Lord Durham in behalf of a youthful and suffering husband under sentence of death, and hoped that I might be permitted to present my petition to his Lordship. Col. C. thought that the Earl would not be able to see me, as he was suffering from head ache, with other indisposition. He took Miss C's petition and waited upon his Lordship, informing me on his return, that the Governor General was then unable to give his attention to the matter; but if I would leave my memorial, Lord D. would consider it, and send the result to my lodgings; to which I replied, that we had but just arrived—as yet had no lodgings, and with his permission, would call for an answer. Ten the following morning was the hour appointed, and we again wended our way to the steam boat.

As we were in a strange city, and knew not where to find a respectable house that might suit circumstances, and hoping to be able to return with the boat the

next evening at high tide, I asked the Captain's permission to remain on board, which he readily gave; and as his lady's society enlivened our meals, we were very comfortable, there being a most excellent Stewardess on board.

This anxious day and night passed off, and ten in the morning found us again at the Castle, where we were informed by Col. C. that Lord D. in council, had not yet decided on the subject of our memorials; to which I replied, that I most sincerely trusted his Lordship would be pleased to do so that day, as did I not leave Quebec at night with the boat, I could not reach Niagara but to find my husband a mangled corpse; and I had every confidence that Lord D., who had already opened the prison doors in Lower Canada, and set the suffering captives at large, would now extend that clemency in his power, to our friends, and at least spare the lives of those for whom we supplicated. Col. C. hoped we might get an answer by four P. M. and we left to return then; our feelings in the mean time, being more easily conceived than described.

In our way to the wharf, where our asylum was moored, I resolved to make at least a grand effort, that day, to procure the reply, should it not be in readiness at four, although I had no means of doing so but by my entreaties with Col. Couper, unless I could obtain an interview with Mr. Buller, Private Secretary to the Gov. Gen'l which I hoped to do. As I was thus meditating on the subject nearest my heart, and trusting that God in his mercy would overrule all for the best, we were asked by a Canadian who stood near a caleche, if

we would like to ride round the city? Yes, was the reply; and thankful was I that any thing had offered to relieve the sad tedium between that hour and four. We rattled through the streets, the principal edifices on which, our good guide described in his best English, and soon drove us to the memorable Plains of Abraham. We stood for a moment on the battle ground where the brave Wolf and Montcalm had so gallantly yielded up their lives to Him who gave them, and seating ourselves again, were driven, with the permission of the Town Major, to the celebrated Citadel, and found ourselves within the impregnable walls of Cape Diamond, which were lined with artillery and the necessary munitions of war, far surpassing, in strength, any thing I could have conceived of it from description, however minute. We ascended the battery, forming the summit of the immense precipice; and gazed upon the smooth bed of the St. Lawrence lying far beneath, with the beautiful Island of Orleans resting upon its bosom, amid other surrounding scenery equally picturesque. While I contemplated with admiration the union of nature and art, in forming so wonderful and magnificent a fortress, the conversation of a couple of strangers who stood near, at once aroused me, as you may suppose, from the subject, to the most painful emotions; for, said one, pointing to a gloomy and dismal part of the Citadel, "there is the prison of those rebels from Upper Canada," naming at the same time, those who were confined there. "At what hour are they allowed to walk?" inquired the other. "At five" was the reply, "they are each permitted to take a half

hour's exercise." And must the brave spirits of Canada, thought I, even in this place of undoubted security, be shut from the light of heaven, with the exception of one half hour in the twenty-four, in that earthy abode, (for their prison appeared literally a part of the battery,) and that, too, for the crime of resisting oppression? If in the nineteenth century, and on the western shores of the Atlantic, it must still be considered a crime, by the minions of royalty; Yea, thus it is; and but a few days more will consign my own dear husband to an early grave for the same offence, if mercy stays not the hand of the executioner.

Perceiving, at the close of this painful soliloquy, that the hour of four was drawing near, we resumed our caleche, and with palpitating hearts, reached the waiting room at the Castle. Col. C. soon appeared, and was sorry to say he had, as yet, received no communication from Lord D., but still hoped that his Lordship would be enabled to give an answer before the hour for sailing; which Col. C. very kindly offered to send to the boat immediately on the receipt of the same. I begged the favor of an interview with Mr. Buller—Mr. B. was engaged—poor Miss C. sat pale and in tears, while I took the liberty to say that, if Col. C. would permit me, I should esteem it a privilege to sit there until his Lordship was pleased to give a reply—that the time had now arrived when further delay would be adequate to a refusal of Lord D. to grant a commutation; and in that case we could expect to return in time only to embrace

the lifeless bodies of those we loved, 'ere they were laid in their tombs; and I *could not* leave that place until his Lordship *did* listen to my entreaties, and spare me the awful alternative. Col. C's humane countenance glowed with compassion; he ordered a glass of wine and water for me, and left the room; while with our agitated hearts raised to God, we awaited his return in almost breathless suspense; and thanks to our heavenly Father, we were not long thus to suffer. The *crisis* was passed, as the smiling countenance of Col. C. evinced on his reappearance, when he told us that, although Lord Durham, as Governor General, could not grant a free pardon to our friends without an investigation of their cases, yet he would order a commutation, or at least, stay the execution until the relative documents could be transmitted to him for his own examination; to which effect his Lordship would give us a letter to Sir George Arthur, requesting him to rest for a time, in his sanguinary career; and also, said Col. C., "a special messenger will accompany you with a private despatch to the Lt. Governor." Thus, my dear friend, were the precious lives of our loved ones spared; and we, returning thanks for the kindness and mercy extended, entered our cabins with lighter hearts than we had left them in the morning.

We were in transports when we got under weigh, having already, in imagination, conveyed the happy intelligence to the sufferers; however, we could not so speedily travel in person, and bore the necessary delay as well as possible. On arriving at Montreal, I was informed by the captain, that a Mr. Simpson, M. P. of the

Lower Province, who had seen me at Quebec, was on board, and wished an introduction, to which I assented, and recognized, immediately, a gentleman whom I had seen at the Castle St. Louis, engaged in the business of the place. He told me that he resided at Coto-Du-Lac, that he was aware of the object of our mission, and compassionated our distress and loneliness, kindly offering his protection as far as his home; at the same time informing us that Sir George Arthur was then on a visiting tour through that part of the country, and hoped we might meet with him without much delay. Yet the possibility of passing him on the way was indeed cause of much anxiety, but which was repeatedly allayed by the kind enquiries of Mr. S. at every stopping place, assuring us that we had not yet passed him, and indeed a kind providence had willed that we should not. But to return: this gentleman, prompted by the kindness and generosity of his heart, enquired if I had still sufficient means to reach home, and on being informed of the extent of my funds, insisted upon my accepting at least twenty dollars, and assured me that he was most happy to have it in his power to alleviate even that portion of my distress. Again my heart rose in gratitude for this fresh manifestation of the care of Providence, and giving the half of the above kind donation to Miss Chandler, we felt at ease once more in regard to pecuniary difficulties.

We reached Coto-Du-Lac that evening, where to our inexpressible satisfaction, we found the steamboat that was to convey us to Cornwall waiting for the arrival

of Sir George, who was hourly expected. As our kind friend was now to leave us, he gave us his counsel, and we awaited the approach of the Governor, who did not, however, in consequence of some delay, reach there until about eight the following morning, when we soon left our moorings, and giving the messenger time to deliver his despatch from Lord Durham, I made preparations to seek an interview, and wished the captain of the boat to give me an introduction to the Aid in attendance. He accordingly brought Major Arthur, the son of Sir George, whom I informed that I was the bearer of a letter from Lord Durham to the Governor, which I begged the favor of presenting, and hoped he would grant me an interview. The aid left to acquaint his father with the request, and returned, saying that the Governor would see us in the ladies' cabin. The captain invited the ladies on deck, leaving us in readiness to receive Sir George, who was soon introduced by the aid.

Sir G., after seating himself, remarked, "You wish to see me, madam." "I do," replied I, "and am happy of the honor, as I have brought a letter from Lord Durham to your Excellency touching cases of vital importance, both to myself and Miss Chandler;" on which I presented the letter, and watched the countenance of the Governor while perusing the same, the dark changes of which indicated no good to our cause if his Excellency could prevent it. He seemed exceedingly annoyed, and said, "You have appealed to Lord Durham in the case of your husband, under sentence of death for *treason*; and you, for your father,"

addressing Miss C. "We have," I replied, "and your Excellency will doubtless admit that the importance of the case is a sufficient apology for making any exertion that might be in our power," to which he reluctantly assented, scarce knowing how to express his displeasure, that the victims had indeed been wrested from his deadly grasp, by his superior, who had thus been induced to exert his authority, beyond the limits of Lower Canada. "But, Madam," said he, "I can not accede to the request, and prevent the due course of the law upon offences of this nature." "*You can not accede to the request!* permit me to say, sir, I left Quebec with an assurance from Lord Durham, that the life of my husband should be spared, at least until his Lordship, as *Governor General*, could investigate the matter." "The state of the country, madam, demands that examples should be made, and most especially of such *obstinate and heinous* offenders," alluding to Mr. Wait's positive refusal to give him any information that would implicate others, which he had sought personally, with an offer of pardon. "And had," said I, "the force of example, as your Excellency is pleased to call those sanguinary measures, and the blood which has already flowed from the gallows, told happily upon the country, I should not now be under the painful necessity of pleading for the life of a beloved husband." "But, madam," he enquiringly remarked, "what am I to do with the repeated applications from the west, imploring me to adopt some measures that may put a stop to those frequent attacks from which Her Majesty's faithful subjects are

suffering the loss of life, property, and so forth?" "Permit me to ask your Excellency in return, will the execution of these men restore to the people of the west the lives and property which they have lost by previous aggression?" "By no means," he replied, "but the example may deter others from similar transgressions." "If your Excellency will allow me, I do most sincerely think that no example could go farther to pacify excited feelings, and have a more salutary influence upon the country at large, than a general extension of mercy and pardon to political offenders; for well do I know that the people of this country have been goaded on to rebellion by various and repeated acts of legalized oppression. I crave your Excellency's indulgence, and beg leave to say further, that my friends, even my own family, have been special objects of this oppressive persecution, the effects of which I have felt from my infancy up to this moment; and no longer since than last autumn, my unfortunate husband was told, by several members of the bar, at the Niagara assize, at which he had a suit, that it was useless for him to seek redress, as he was known by the Court to be a *reformer*; and alone, your Excellency, to these sad truths may be attributed the present lamentable state of Canada; a resistance to which has placed my husband in his present melancholy situation. But I fear I am trespassing upon your time, sir, and cannot but trust that your Excellency will view the exciting causes in palliation of the effect, and now follow the beautiful examples of mercy given us in sacred scripture, by kindly allaying the

anxiety that agonizes our minds. (He would refer me to the same for consolation)—and I thank God, sir, that a reliance upon sovereign mercy, and confidence in divine Providence, has thus far sustained me under these trying circumstances, and I trust will continue to do so. May we hope that your Excellency will think favorably of our request?"

He could not say that he would, and left the room. Upon which I determined to lay his refusal before Lord Durham by the return of the messenger, who would leave us at Cornwall; consequently begged leave to inform his Lordship, that, although we were assured of the safety of our friends while at Quebec, yet Sir George seemed determined to frustrate his noble purposes of mercy, the benign influence of which I still implored might be extended to Upper Canada, as the Lower Canadians had already, in a measure, felt its radiance. As I was sealing and addressing this communication, the Governor returned, bringing with him Mr. Macaulay, his private secretary, whom he introduced, saying that he had brought his secretary to note down, if we would give it, the substance of the verbal communications we had received in Quebec, which we readily gave, and after which, I told Sir George, that since the honor of his interview, I had taken the liberty of stating the result of the same, with his answer, to Lord Durham, which I intended to forward immediately, holding the letter in my hand. "Oh," said he, "I wish you to understand me, madam, before you communicate my answer to Lord Durham;" and his lip quivered with rage. "And I shall be most

happy to understand any thing from your Excellency that may be *ought* more satisfactory than what I have been led to suppose." "*Well, I have granted a respite to your husband, and also to your father,*" addressing Miss C., "but there *must* be more executions; that execrable character, Beemer, must pay the penalty of his act. There shall no mercy be dealt out to him." "Still," replied I, "we must hope that your Excellency will think better of it, and not make another exception to the now happily adopted rule of mercy."

Sir George left us; Mr. Macaulay asked if I was a native of Canada, and being told that I was, he regretted much that I should have been involved in circumstances of so grievous a nature, and hoped that I might be reinstated, and yet be happy in the country of my birth. I thanked him, and he bade us good morning.

We were now nearing Cornwall, where we would land, and where Lord D's messenger would return to Quebec. I considered with what difficulty the acquiescence in Lord D's decision had been extorted from Sir George, who displayed evident symptoms of anger, and entertained fears that he might have been induced by duplicity to stay me with a false hope, that I might not further press the suit with Lord D. I accordingly delivered the letter I had prepared to the messenger, to convey to his master, and could not help feeling a secret satisfaction, that Lord D. would at least be apprised of the apparent disrespect with which the Lieutenant Governor had treated his authority; at the same time, it being contrary to reason,

order, or usage, that he should dare to contravene it. I landed quite indisposed, from mental excitement, and the natural effect of being separated from a nursing babe, on whom, poor little dear, I had scarcely thought since I left. But now that it seemed impossible for her father to fall a victim to the gallows, my feelings naturally recurred to my child, and I feared that she too might be ill; but thank Heaven, I was enabled to cast all my care upon Him who is ever the friend of the desolate, and was thus permitted to seek the repose I so much needed. The coach did not leave until morning, when I found myself much refreshed, and better able to pursue my anxious journey.

But to be brief and not weary your patience, I will say little of the latter part of the route; permit me, however, to inform you, that at Prescott we fell in with the Lord Bishop Montaine, of Montreal, on his way to Toronto; who, clad as he was in his sacerdotal skirt or robe, made rather a singular appearance to those who had never seen a high functionary of the establishment. I was introduced to him, and conversed on the melancholy subject of my mission to Quebec. He was very affable, and kindly pointed me to the great source of consolation under the most trying earthly afflictions. I begged that, if an opportunity offered of his aiding me with his influence at Toronto, he would give it; which he said was a difficult matter with a person standing in the relation to the Crown that he did; but that he might have an opportunity of benefitting my cause, which he would be glad to embrace, as he deeply commiserated my painful situation.

The good Bishop left us at Toronto, our anxiety seemingly increasing with every revolution of the wheels, until we reached Niagara, where we landed on the 22d, and found preparations making for the execution of our friends on the approaching 25th. We flew to the prison to communicate the happy intelligence of the promised respite; but having nothing official with us, and no orders to that effect having as yet been sent, our report of mercy was scarcely credited; indeed, the jailer had received orders from the Sheriff to have all things in readiness to carry out the horrid sentence to the letter. I saw my dear husband for a moment, and endeavored to console him by assurances that the respite would come, as I had it from both Lord Durham and Sir George, who *could* not thus practice deception. He informed me that our dear child had been dangerously ill, though at the last accounts from her she was rather better. Still I could not see her, she being twenty miles distant, and I on the following morning must retrace my steps to Toronto, and learn the reason why the expected respite had not been sent. Accordingly, at eight in the morning I again left the wharf for Toronto, scarce knowing to whom I might apply in the absence of the Governor, whom I had left at Cornwall; but was determined on finding some one of the officials. I stepped into a carriage and told the lad to drive to the residence of the Chief Justice—he did so—the house was shut up. Drive to the Solicitor General's, said I; but seeing a gentleman in the way, I asked the boy if he knew him. Yes, replied he, it is Judge McLean;

upon which I stopped, and asked the gentleman if I had the honor of addressing Judge McLean? He replied in the affirmative, when I told him the importance of my errand, and begged that he would inform me where I might find the members of the executive council. He very kindly directed me to the Parliament House, where the council were then sitting, and to which he said he was going. On reaching the place I was shown to Mr. Sullivan, of whom I begged leave to enquire whether the Governor had not ordered a respite for the Niagara prisoners? at the same time informing him what I had been told at Quebec, as well as what Sir George had himself said, a few days previous, in the presence of Mr. Macaulay and Miss Chandler. To which he replied, that he had as yet received no such communication from his Excellency, but should there be reality in the matter, we might expect the respite over per the Transit on the following morning at eleven o'clock; and if I had it from the Governor, he said I might of course *rely upon it*: still I felt misgivings on the subject; and the possibility of its being a ruse of Sir George, the better to carry out his predetermined purposes of cruelty, would force itself upon me notwithstanding the many reasons I had to expect the reverse. I accordingly called on Bishop Mountaine—informed him of my fears and hopes, and entreated him to see the council, and advise them to stay proceedings until something did arrive from Sir George. He promised to do what he could. I had now but time to reach the steam boat, which was ringing for the last call, and I hurried on board,

to await the anxious time near my husband, whom I could not see that night, it being six when we arrived. Yet I was enabled to trust in God, and beseech Him who could turn the hearts of men to mercy, and rule all events for our good and His glory, to smile upon us in this our time of trial, and grant us sustaining grace to await His will.

This night passed, and in the morning, though not knowing but the worst might come, I endeavored to encourage my husband, when permitted to hand in his breakfast through the iron bars that separated us, in the hope of the respite being over at eleven that day; but this hope was doomed to disappointment. I thought the evening boat must be the bearer of it; still it came not at six, and the next day, between the hours of eleven and one, was the time appointed for the executions. Yet I could not help but feel that come it must and would, though nearly distracted by this cruel delay of the Governor, who evidently, at the best, was determined to torture us until literally the last moment. My hopes were now centered in the arrival of the Transit at eleven; which came, but brought not the message of mercy; neither did she bring the expected Sheriff, who had gone to Kingston with those prisoners who had been deemed more worthy of a commutation by Sir George; and as a last hope, the possibility of his bringing the order from the Governor at Kingston, or of being absent until after the allotted time had expired, alone sustained us. About twelve a messenger announced the arrival of the Government steamer bringing the Sheriff, who was

indeed the bearer of the long expected respite fresh from the hand of Sir George Arthur, whom he had left the day before at Kingston.

I must leave you to imagine this overwhelming scene, as I cannot even attempt to describe it, or give you the least idea of the feelings, caused by the safety of four precious lives thus spared by a merciful God, who had deigned to hear and answer our prayers; and will close this lengthy epistle by informing you, that, as soon as the violence of those feelings had in a measure subsided, and our hearts had been raised in gratitude to the Most High for this wonderful deliverance, I left Niagara, and hastened to embrace my dear babe, who was with her grand-mother, and whose health I found on my arrival, was so much improved that I was enabled to remove her on a pillow the following day to Niagara, that I might still be convenient to her suffering father, near whom I remained until the subsequent order for his removal to Fort Henry, at Kingston.

Your's, most respectfully,

MARIA WAIT.

LETTER IV.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

June, 1840.

To ———,

Dear Sir: The arrival of the respite, though for so brief a period, burst like a meteor upon our minds, and gave us not "a faint glimmering hope," but a positive assurance of an effective interposition; for when

once a delay was obtained, and the documents lodged in the hands of the Earl of Durham, there could be no doubt of a lenient course being pursued, and no more blood be spilled in this case; for the application made in behalf of myself and Mr. Chandler would equally benefit the others, who were reserved with us for execution.

The interposition of the Earl in the affairs of U. C. called forth some harsh censures from Sir George Arthur; and it led to serious altercations between the two dignitaries. Sir G. in his private despatches to his Lordship, remonstrated "in no measured terms," against his having been induced "to listen to the appeals of a wife and daughter of two of the most aggravated offenders, and interpose between them and the just execution of the law." The recent publication of the official documents bearing on this point, are conclusive evidence; that to these personal petitions alone, can we attribute the preservation of our lives. This respite was soon followed by another of ten days, and subsequently one of near a month, extending the time to the first of October, when the deputy Sheriff appeared at the jail, bearing in his hand a letter, ostensibly from the Lieutenant Governor, with orders for him to read it to us, and receive and transmit our answers. It informed us that "His Excellency, in council, had concluded to listen to our petitions and grant pardons, on condition of our accepting transportation in the lieu of death." Of course transportation as an alternative, was generally preferred, and answers were given accordingly—yet not on my part without a coun-

ter "condition"—for I supposed it a mere mockery, to give coloring to his unbending arrogance, not once giving him credit for the full share of superciliousness his subsequent conduct proved him to possess in so great a degree; and consequently replied that, "if by transportation, he meant only to convey me from Niagara, or even to England, I should not oppose it; but would prefer death to being banished to Van Dieman's Land, therefore would not accept the terms of the pardon." Although I gave a conditional answer, yet I did not perceive the extent of this artifice, or that it would be made a subterfuge for law. But in England I found much importance attached to that condition, for it was assumed by the ministry, as ground sufficient for carrying the "commuted sentence" into full effect.

A few days after this "compact" arrangement, the clanking of chains announced an intended removal. When the execrable fetters were riveted on my limbs, the cauterizing iron entered my soul; and not till then did I feel, I was truly no longer free; a *manacled slave!* was a conception I never before rightly understood. I had not valued personal liberty as I ought; but now that it was for ever gone, I viewed it as the most precious boon Heaven could bestow. All the wealth of the world was as nothing in comparison to it; and on the contrary, slavery was the most abhorrent of all evils.

Mrs Wait as usual, was now at hand to offer condolence, and calm my perturbed feelings. She packed up what clothes I had there, and forgot not the few

books, a perusal of which had given me pleasure. She awaited with resignation far superior to mine, the fiat that should separate our persons perhaps for ever. I kissed and caressed that dear, dear child, you speak so tenderly of, and wrung the hand of her whose affectionate care I fancied I was no more to experience. This was a scene I had often anticipated, and thought myself prepared to meet; but I had looked upon it superficially, and seen it only in the distance. A sense of desolation came over me that I could not shake off; and had it not been for the superior fortitude taught me by Mrs. Wait, I fear I should have shown a feminine spirit—a want of manhood. We had but little time for leave-taking—were torn from mourning friends and hurried on board a steamer for Toronto, where we arrived at the dusk of the evening, on the 6th October. We found an immense multitude crowding the wharf, and lining the street through which we were to pass to the jail. From them proceeded mingled shouts of imprecations and pity—derision and sympathy. But I soon observed it was by the squalid alone that imprecations were uttered, while compassion was visible in the countenances of all who appeared worthy respect. It is true, such salutations, at first, discomposed my mind a little, but the commiseration of the better class reconciled me to this new species of greeting, and I felt that I should ever prefer the insult to the praise of the varying mob.

At the jail we were received by the very *obsequious* host, Mr. Kid, who invited us to walk into the hall, *humanely* offering the dirty floor for a lodging. We

could not, of course, return him much compliment for his *generosity*. Nothing was offered here to eat, and we should have been obliged to go supperless to bed, had not the guard kindly shared their provisions with us on board, before reaching Toronto. In this respect we have always found the common soldier generous, even beyond his means. This was the first night I had essayed to rest with my leg and wrist coupled to another; and I found the attempt nugatory. Here too, I first found vermin, i. e. fleas and bugs, which crept into our clothes, and in the morning refused to part company. After rising, a draught from a milk woman's pail did more to revive drowsy nature, than would a dozen pots of Mr. Kid's ale, which he profusely offered, "provided always," we would first present him with the "proper equivalent." Our escort, with Wheeler at their head, arrived very early, and led us to the dock, through the same scenes we had witnessed the evening previous. We put off at eight, and reached Kingston by the following dawn, when we were immediately marched away to the jail, a large edifice near the center of the town, where we remained seated on the floor, until twelve M., when we were again called on to move.

At this time a waggon was provided for us, in which we were driven slowly across the Rideau to Fort Henry, followed and accompanied by the Kingston Sheriff, deputy, and jailer, the Niagara deputy and jailer, with a whole division of red coats, carrying arms at present. At the gates of the fort the guard was turned out to receive us, and our entrance was between two

platoons of soldiers, which closed after us as if to shut out the hope of ever repassing that barrier. Fort H. is constructed of good workmanship, on a commanding position, and has an imposing appearance. It is commodiously planned, and has an area of about a half acre, with a large reservoir for water underneath. If well manned, it might hold out against almost any number of assailants.

Our irons were soon knocked off, and our pockets searched—money, knives and papers taken from us, but afterwards, all but the papers were restored. The prisoners already here, consisting of those from Toronto, London District, Point au Pelee, and Niagara, were in two rooms or wards, without communication.

I was, with three others, McLeod, Beemer, and Warner, ushered into the one occupied by Messrs. Parker, Wixon, Watson, and fifteen or sixteen others, where we found a breakfast prepared, of which we partook with avidity, it being the first food offered that day, though then near four P. M.

I was surprised, and even piqued, by the congratulations with which I was greeted by all. It seemed a perfect verifying of the old sentiment of "misery likes company." But I soon discovered that it was a genuine burst of joy for our opportune escape from death; for of our respite and ultimate commutation, they had received no information previous to that morning, and necessarily supposed we had suffered the penalty designed.

As soon as I had time to look about me and make inquiry, I found my companions consisted of what re-

nained of the Toronto, London District prisoners, and J. G. Parker, while the others occupied a ward adjoining. Parker and Watson were the two unfortunately recaptured after the celebrated escape of sixteen persons from this fort—fourteen of whom succeeded in reaching the U. S. I obtained a circumstantial account of the whole affair, but do not consider it necessary to be given here. I looked upon it as a daring adventure, that must have emanated from a fearless, intrepid spirit, and been guided by a master hand, that would have done honor to the cause of liberty, if brought into full action in the field of battle. The whole exhibits a sagacity and courage belonging to but few, who were left to act in the patriot cause. We can only conjecture what the effect would have been, had these and other *restrained* brave spirits had a proper field for action. It will remain a wonder to all who visit the fort, how a plan participated in by so many, could have been matured and followed up with sufficient precaution, to permit the digging through a four foot wall, and traversing of near half the underground rooms and outside trench of the fort, with success. While we were there many persons visited the interior, with no other motive than to witness the theatre of so noted an escape, from such an impregnable fortress.

I found the society very agreeable indeed; and our time was not "killed," as is usually the case with prisoners, nor spent in games of chance, swearing, lewd conversation, tale-telling, &c. &c. But industry prevailed—all were engaged in something useful, orna-

mental or entertaining—some were reading, some writing; others were occupied in making port folios, small wooden boxes, or other mementoes for friendly presents. I soon introduced the art of making a sort of curiously wrought paper memorial, on which were inscribed, in elegant style, names and short, pithy mottoes, savoring of patriotism and philanthropy. These were eagerly sought after, and bundles of them were sent to our friends every opportunity.

Messrs. Wixon, Watson, Tidey, Parker, McLeod, and myself, united in an association, soon after we had come among them, for the purpose of literary improvement and amusement for the long evenings, by delivering, in rotation, original lectures. In writing, delivering, or listening to them, the time rolled cheerfully and unheeded on.

My first address was upon the subject of Patriotism. I spoke ardent and earnestly, and with all the ability and eloquence I was master of; for it was a subject that had actuated every nerve of my system, and reduced me to my present slavish situation. By request, I copied it for several persons, among whom was Mr. Parker, whose copy fell into the hands of the tory faction at Cornwall, and became the cause of considerable harshness, for it spoke very disparagingly of the government.

Every Sabbath we listened with pleasure to an evangelical discourse and instructing commentations on the Psalms of David, with other interesting passages of scripture, by Mr. Wixon. Indeed, we had great reason to regard the presence of this very excellent

man as contributing largely to our spiritual good and temporal quiet.

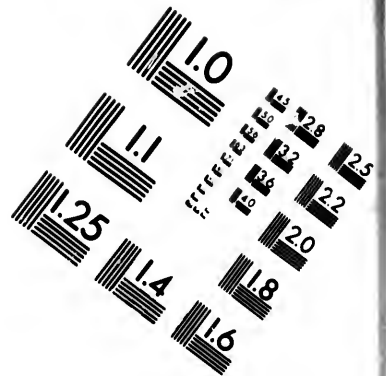
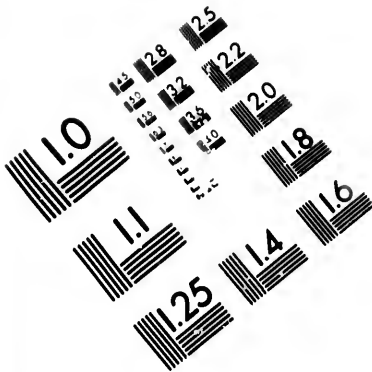
About two weeks after our arrival, Sir George Arthur visited the fort. He made his *entre* with as much pomp and parade as the head of all the Autocrats would assume on a gala day. After an array and manœuvring of all the soldiers in the garrison, he took possession of one of the officers rooms and sent for most of the prisoners, particularly those from Niagara. But I was slighted. There was no condescension, no courtesy for me. I had displeased him, unpardonably offended him, and he must show it. Since the Earl of D. had resigned, and left the government in the charge of Sir John Colborne, a man equally blood-thirsty as himself, he felt no restraint, and no disposition to mollify, but to add to the mental misery of all who were under his displeasure. While he had given hope to all called upon, for a lenient course being pursued in each individual case, and an admission to freedom on guaranteed good conduct, "there was no favor to be expected by the obstinate Wait."

Our provisions consisted of one pound of bread, three-fourths pound fresh meat, and a small quantity of vegetables served us twice per week—tea and sugar we supplied ourselves. The food was prepared by one of our number, sent to a hireling for cooking, and invariably returned short of what it went out. The bread seldom lasted the time it was designed; and I have known eighteen extra loaves bought in our ward in one week, in addition to the rations received.

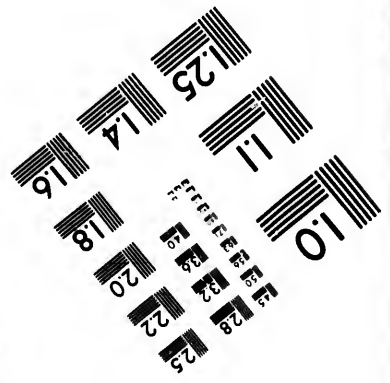
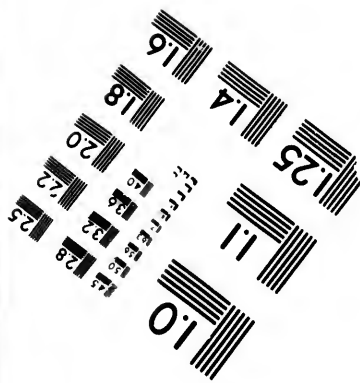
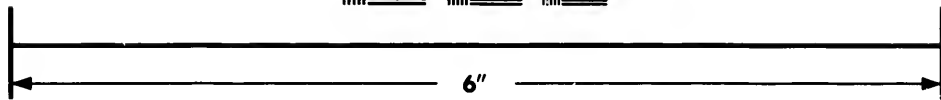
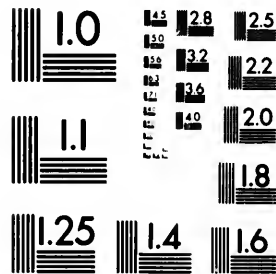
The prisoners apartments were visited every day by the Sheriff, deputy, with two or three, and sometimes six or eight, military officers, accompanied by a sergeant, corporal, and file of men, to guard the entrance, while the room underwent a critical examination by the civil, in presence of the military functionaries. Every bed, box or package was removed, so that each square inch of the floor could be seen and sounded; Clothes hanging against the wall, were carefully moved aside, that no spot might be hid from view. The men likewise were all paraded in the middle of the ward, in single file, and answered to their names, while the sergeant audibly counted the number present, and an ensign referred to a paper held in his hand, to see that none were missing. In joking a Captain who visited, relative to the extreme precautions used, he replied—"you Yankees are such slippery fellows, that we never know when we've got you. Stone walls, iron grates, and *red coats* are no security." They were warned to these daily examinations by the late escape.

We usually had a man stationed at the window about the hour of the customary visits, to report the approach of the officers, when every article of amusement or memento would be put aside; for an order had been issued by the commandant, prohibiting the manufacture of those trifles, fearing they had been, or would be, used as bribes for the sentinel, &c. On the morning of the fourth of November, the man at the window reported the approach of the sheriff, accompanied by two females. My heart fluttered with intense anxiety,





**IMAGE EVALUATION
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while I thrust my face among the dozen the report had brought to the grate, to catch a glimpse of the individuals mentioned, each hoping to discover in them a friend. As soon as I caught a view of the figures, the expression of "my wife!" burst from my lips in deep pathos. In an inordinate tremor of delight, I waited the tardy unlocking of the door, when I found in my embrace the object of all my anxious solicitude but a shadow of mortality. In every lineament of the face were visible traces of care and intense anxiety. Unusual exertion, combined with deep mental distress, had made sad havoc of youth and of health, though the spirit was yet whole and the mind still firm.

This new expression of her affection, despite the dangers of late lake navigation, endeared her more, if possible, to my heart than ever, and I felt, though a prisoner, I would not exchange conditions with the man, though wealthy and free, who had no affection lavished upon him but what his riches purchased. We had but a few minutes for conversation. The sheriff, as soon as he had examined the room, told her to leave, as he must lock the door. However, she stood awhile at the grated window, but not a word must pass without being heard by the guard, or a trifle given without examination. A parcel containing winter clothes, a few pounds of tea, some butter and dried fruit, with a pail of preserves, were cautiously inspected before they could be given up to me. The same conduct was pursued towards Miss Chandler in her communications with her father, in the next ward. Mrs. Wait visited me each morning while I remained,

for the sad consolation of fifteen minutes conversation at the window, for subsequent to the first visit, she was debarred entering the door.

At that time, my health was very good, not having indulged in useless repining, but drawing my mind as much as possible from all sources of discontent and sorrow, having been taught, that contentment in a calm and quiet mind, is a "bank that never fails; a bank that yields a perpetual dividend of happiness," let the possessor be in whatever situation he may, a prison, a work-house, or poverty at home. And, that industry was a virtue that would take away half the dreariness of the prison walls. It does, indeed, busy the mind, and thus prevent the gathering of gloom, while it raises pleasures by exercising the fancy; and imparts delight by the development of heretofore hidden faculties or abilities. When at large, amid the quiet and pleasant "flowery fields," one must be of a very lethargic disposition indeed, who could not enjoy the prospect, and indulge in the pleasures of life: but when he is incarcerated, and all the beauties of nature, the feelings, sympathies, and publications of the world and society are shut from him, if his mind can associate the pictured fancies of the landscape with objects, however gloomy, around him, and feel thankful for thus much of enjoyment, he is truly worthy of happiness.

While here in this sort, Beemer gave the first indication of a deceitful and treacherous disposition. It was observed by some of our companions, yet I could not receive the opinion. But few of the number, however, would associate with him, on account of his ex-

treme vulgarity and obscene conversation. During the hour permitted for daily recreation in the area of the fort, a small space of which was allotted to us, Beemer would walk to and fro, dark and moodily, in appearance a perfect personification of one of Milton's "fallen angels, devising nefarious schemes against the human race." I believe, however, his feigned disclosures gained no favor at the "*fount of law*," though penned by the inimitable John Arthur Tidey.

For some time after our arrival, rumors were afloat of the Governor sending part of our number to Quebec; and when his Excellency visited the fort, it was said by some, that they had been informed by him, a part of the prisoners should be freed on bail, while others would be sent to Quebec. But these reports had died away, and we began to suppose the lateness of the season precluded the possibility of a removal. But on the morning of the 9th of November, we were miserably undeceived upon that subject, for much earlier than usual, Sheriff McDonald entered the fort, accompanied by Mrs. Wait. He came directly to our ward, and announced the order of the Governor for an "immediate removal to Quebec, for safe keeping during the winter, of Wixon, Watson, Parker, Wait, McLeod, Chandler, Walker, Alves, Bedford, Malcolm, Brown, Anderson, Waggoner, Vernon, Miller, Reynolds, Grant, Mallory, Gemmell, McNulty, Cosley, Van Camp and Beemer. The others, Tidey, Hart, &c., will remain for further orders." He continued, "the orders are peremptory for an immediate march, for he does not think it safe to retain you here, as the coun-

try is in a state of excitement and alarm, in the expectation of an irruption from the States. You will, therefore, have but an hour to prepare in, which you will, of course, use to the best advantage. Wait, if he wishes, can accompany his wife to one of the vacant rooms, where they will be out of the bustle, and my deputy will attend them, with an armed guard, and particularly observe that no papers or other illicit articles pass between them unexamined." We accepted the offer of the sheriff as a courtesy, and followed the deputy to a room only occupied by the trunks, clothes, baggage, &c., of Messrs. Montgomery, Brople, &c., left in their flight, while we in turn were closely followed by a redecoat, who in his heart pitied our forlorn prospect, but dare not show it in presence of the unfeeling civic menial.

Soon after we entered, Mrs. Wait endeavored to put in my hand unobserved some papers she had written since arriving at Kingston, for her own pastime and my amusement, but the hawk eye of the servile lackey quickly detected the act, when they must, of course, be submitted to his perusal before given up to me. And I am sure every word was duly scanned, as if he feared some treason lurked in the letters, for during the perusal, he was several times obliged to refer to the writer for elucidation. Such ungenerous conduct elicited an audible groan of disgust from the breast of the sentry. The deputy was called away for a few moments, and the soldier showed his liberality by turning his back, as if to say, "now do as you please;" and well were those few moments improved, for a has-

ty exchange of papers and mementoes took place, and when the deputy returned, there was no need of his vigilance.

We had a great deal to say to each other, but as we were in a few minutes to separate, perhaps forever, our time was spent in encouraging each other by pointing the mind and hope to Him who will watch over all who trust to his unerring counsel; though we were cast upon the wide world without other hope, He would be to us a guide and surety against despair; though the enemy taunt and oppress, He would be merciful and lenient.

In conjecturing my probable destination and ultimate fate, I mentioned the likelihood of being sent to England, whither, she declared she would follow, if by any means it could be accomplished; and she was sure her personal appeals there, would result in my freedom. The idea of the voyage across the ocean, by a female, alone and unprotected, and the obstacles she would have to surmount, with the probability of meeting an unsympathising and unfriendly feeling in London, made me shudder and repudiate the *thought*. But her mind, her heart, her all, were enlisted; and she promptly directed me to her success, through every embarrassing circumstance, in her former appeals to the Earl of Durham. But I still urged the difference between an inland journey of fourteen hundred miles, surrounded with known sympathy; and a voyage across the wide ocean, unprotected, amid strangers whose kindness would be doubtful. She would point me to Him who sustains the feeble, guards the way-worn,

and protects the friendless in every trial of danger, and every vicissitude of fortune. As a last argument to deter her from the resolution she had expressed, I mentioned our dear babe, whom she ought now to consider as the only link that bound her affections to earth. *That*, indeed, was a subject that vibrated every chord in her nature, and, as I fancied, for a moment, made her swerve; but it was only for a moment, and that, too, was met by the same undaunted reliance on Providence; and with a countenance radiant with superior fortitude, she said, "will not He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and as a shepherd carries them in His bosom, keep her from neglect and want? Yes: should I hear of your removal to Van Dieman's Land, and be unsuccessful in my petitions to the Queen, I *will* follow you thither, and share your exile, nothing loth in leaving our child in the hands of the 'orphan's God.'" I was effectually silenced; yet had I desired to offer any further impediments, they would have been that instant cut short, by a summons to come and be invested with the chains of honor. Our minds had been wrought up, not to the climax of despair, but to a high hope and ardent buoyancy; and we snatched a hasty adieu with a calmness that I often wonder at. Oh that I could ever be guided, or actuated, by the same inspiring feelings of resignation that were infused in my soul at that last parting scene. Not one murmur was breathed against my wayward destiny, but my heart was filled with an inexpressible glow of satisfaction; *that* continued to cheer, and buoy it up, until the last farewell wave of the handkerchief

of my bosom companion died in the distance, and I found myself on the bow deck of a steamboat, coupled hand and foot to J. G. Parker, and surrounded with my companions in tribulation, among a number of horses, who disputed possession with us, as well as a whole regiment of regulars, whose bristling bayonets showed well that no escape from there was practicable.

As a new scene is now commencing, I will close this communication.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER V.

MRS. WAIT'S LETTER—VISIT TO FORT HENRY.

LOCKPORT, Dec. 20, 1838.

To ———,

My Dear Friend: It is under deep depression of feeling, that I attempt to acknowledge the receipt of your kind favor, and endeavor to inform you of my painful, though providential, visit to my dear husband at Fort Henry. I left my child, and with a supply of winter clothing for Mr. Wait, and many other necessaries for the comfort of the poor prisoners, set out for Kingston on the 2d Nov.; and being informed, at Niagara, that I could not expect to see my husband without an order from the Governor; I called on Sir George at Toronto, requesting permission to do so. He told me that the responsibility alone devolved upon the Sheriff

and officers of the garrison; but that *did it* rest with him, he should deem it imprudent to admit me within the walls of the Fort. Being rather amuse' with this *novel* idea, I smiled, and asked him why? He replied, "there was little doubt but that I was aware of the secret combinations formed on the American side, for the subversion of the government; and females, who were capable of doing injury, might be very dangerous visitors in such a place." Upon which I laughed again, begging that his Excellency would not deprive me of the consolation of seeing my husband, from any fears of that nature, which must be groundless, destitute and afflicted as I was." Thus ended the conference, and I hastened to the steamboat, regretting that I had been induced to call on him at all, as he now had it in his power to thwart my wishes, and prevent my seeing my husband, if he chose to do so. I went, however, to the proper officer, immediately on my arriving at Kingston, and obtained permission to go to the fort at the time when the Sheriff attended on his daily visit of examination, (which was a precaution taken after the fortunate escape of Messrs. Montgomery, Mordaunt, &c.) but the time of my stay could not exceed fifteen minutes. Even for this privilege I was thankful, as nearly a month had now elapsed since I had seen my poor husband taken from Niagara, and I hoped that I might administer much to his comfort, by seeing him the specified time, each morning, during my stay. I had met Miss Chandler at Toronto, on her way to see her father; consequently we were companions in our visits to the prison of our friends, which was much

more pleasant than for either to have gone alone; but she was obliged to return on the third day after her arrival, while I wished to remain longer, and embrace every opportunity of alleviating the sufferings of the prisoners; but of this consolation I was soon to be deprived, as I had been there but five days when I was informed by Sheriff McDonald, that "express orders had been sent from the Governor, for the immediate removal of the prisoners to Quebec, where they would most likely embark for England, and perhaps for Van Dieman's Land at once, should it not be too late in the season to pass out the gulf, otherwise they would remain at Quebec, for safe keeping, during the winter; and that in the course of two hours, they must be on their way." This unexpected intelligence nearly overpowered me: the time had now come when I must be separated, perhaps for ever, from my husband, for whom I had fondly hoped I might obtain a pardon, and who would soon be beyond the reach of any kindness or sympathy with which I, or any of his friends, might console him, and would doubtless be subjected anew to insults and cruelties under which he might sink; I could scarcely bear the torturing thought of seeing him under these trying circumstances.— I *was* enabled, however, to make the effort; and accompanied the Sheriff, who allowed me to converse with my husband, in the presence of a guard, until he was called to be attired in the *habiliments of British cruelty*. When I saw him again, he was chained both hand and foot, to Mr. Parker, who, with twenty-one others, were to be torn from all they held

dear on earth, and doomed to the degradation of penal convicts; many of them leaving large families subject to want and distress, while the youthful countenance was filled with anguish at this early visitation of wretchedness and wo. Twenty-two of the number were paired off in chains, when, to the astonishment of reason and humanity, was marshalled in the rear, the talented editor, Randal Wixon, who was a Baptist minister, apparently fifty years of age, supported by a crutch and cane, having been deprived of a leg at an early age; but whose resigned and holy countenance shed a luster even on this agonizing scene, and gave ample evidence that his affections and hopes were not placed on sublunary things, but that he looked for a city of repose beyond the bounds of earthly persecution.

I was not now allowed to approach my husband, as all were surrounded by a strong guard, and could but look the words of hope I fain would have spoken, to encourage him to bear, with resignation to the Divine will, all that might yet befall him, while I endeavored to pray that God would sustain us. They were now nearly ready. I wished the guard to ask the prisoners if I could render them any service by writing to their friends. Yes, said Linus W. Miller, a brave American from Chautauque county, whose noble bearing was ever admirable, "tell my friends that I am well, and would have written them a letter of adieu, had I not been prevented by the *Queen's ribands*," holding up his manacled hands. The order to march was now given; and as the prisoners, with the soldiers

who guarded them, passed out of the fort, I followed in the distance, gazing after the partner of my life and affections, who was fast receding from my sight.

They were soon lodged on board the boat to be carried onward; and as the last glimpse was cut short, by the crowding of the soldiers on deck, unconscious of my own lonely situation, or aught, save the distressing feelings that absorbed my soul, I felt myself sinking to the ground, when an elderly gentleman, whom I had not seen until then, took hold of my arm, and kindly asked me if any of those prisoners were friends of mine? I told him my husband was there. He said he would see me to a house where I could remain until I was better able to go to my boarding house; which he did, and brought me some hot wine and water, which served in a measure to recruit me, as I was very cold, having stood nearly two hours in a bleak November wind. This kind, good man informed me when the boat had left, and I arose with an effort to reach my lodgings, where I went immediately to bed, not being able to sit up until the next day; and must ever feel grateful to my compassionate hostess, Mrs. Whelpley, who, with her family, treated me with the utmost kindness, making no charge for their attention.

My business being now completed at Kingston. I returned to my dear child, whom I took; and, *heart stricken* with the trials I had suffered in Canada, I came to this place, where, I am thankful to say, I have found many friends, who sympathise with, and endeavor to console me; and since here, I have received a letter from my dear husband, at Quebec, describing

the many hardships he endured on the passage down, and informing me that he was, indeed, to embark for England, on the 23d ult., whither I cannot but hope I shall yet be enabled to go, and plead for a pardon or mitigation of his sufferings, at the foot of the throne. Surely the youthful Queen will deign to listen to my entreaties, if I can reach her; and I *do* trust, that God, in his merey, will provide a way for me to do so, though all seems dark at present; and if it is *at all* practicable, be assured, I will go; at which time, however, I will write you again.

Yours, truly,

M. W.

LETTER VI.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

August, 1840.

To — — —,

My Dear Sir: My last closed on the 9th of Nov., 38 at the embarkation of twenty-three state prisoners on board the steamer Coburgh, and the last parting scene with my wife. When the fiat went forth that separated us, probably forever, she followed at a distance, (as near as the humanity of our guards would permit her to approach,) saw my legs and arms shackled, and still accompanied to the place of embarkation, and there stood in the face of a chill wintry wind, waving adieus until we were lost to her sight.

When aroused to a sense of reality by the surrounding objects of life, and the pains caused by the chains

of despotism, I began to give place to a conception of loneliness, and a disposition to review the chequered scenes of the past, or to pierce the dark veil of futurity that hung like a pall before me. Neither hope nor calmness forsook me; I felt that every principle actuating my heart, and inducing me to take the part I did in opposition to oppression, was founded on truth, on justice, and on philanthropy; and necessarily the exertions must ultimately result to the good of some, although there was no probability of my participating in that good, yet the anticipation carried with it a full compensation for all my personal suffering and loss. I could see in the obscurity of the future a succession of trials, of distress, and of sorrow; yet beyond was a gleam of sunshine, a bright halo of joy, piercing the gloom, and beaconing me on to the rencounter, with not a mere hope, but a glowing confidence, grounded on substantial evidence, that has not yet deserted me, though a gulf of sorrow and banks of trouble must yet be traversed ere I reach the gleam of sunshine, or am encircled by that halo of joy; the partaker of freedom reunited to the dear ones of earth. Still the probability of evil and want befalling those loved ones, occasionally brought with it a corroding thought, a bitter pang, yet God was their shield, in whom they trusted, and surely I ought not to mourn distresses I knew no certainty of.

You will see by the following extract from one of Mrs. Wait's letters, mentioned in my last, and written on the night of the 8th Nov., in expectation of not visiting me on the morning of the 9th, that *she* had

not the slightest intimation of the hasty removal previous to the morning on which we embarked.

* * * "I have remained here, after being informed that I could not be allowed to render you any assistance, or even visit you in your abode, unless under such restrictions as would add to our misery; for I could not bring myself to leave the spot where my husband sighs unheeded to the un-sympathizing walls, less obdurate, in fact, than the hearts of your relentless keepers. I feel a melancholy pleasure in gazing upon you, though it be through a grated window, and in conversing with you, though every word is greedily swallowed by an infidel guard. Oh! will the time ever come when we will be differently circumstanced? Although every other consideration is but secondary, yet I must tear myself away, for our dear babe claims a mother's care. There is no opportunity offering for my gaining my daily bread, which I faintly would do, if I could in the slightest measure meliorate your condition, or avert one pang from your already stretched heart. The season is also rapidly approaching in which it would be utterly impossible for me to regain my home. There is, likewise, so much excitement in the country, and rumors of a general rising, that the Governor may take it into his head to remove you and your fellow prisoners, which would necessarily render my situation one of unparalleled unhappiness. I sincerely hope that our present adieu will be for but a short period, as I strongly trust that my application to the Queen will be favorably received: if not, and the government persist in carrying your sentence into full effect, (which I can not believe they dare do,) I am determined on proceeding direct to England, and personally claim, at her Majesty's hands, your freedom; and she can not deny what I shall have travelled so far, and surmounted so many difficulties to encompass." * * *

Here were evidences of an unbounded generosity and devoted affection that ought to maintain a lasting influence over my mind in scenes of future trial, and furnish a sad consoling pleasure to the heart when disposed to repine. And they ever have: though senti-

ments expressed at our parting were stronger reiterations of these, yet a sight of the precious billet would often refresh the mind, and bring the recurrence of a thought that might not otherwise have presented itself at the particular time it was needed. They remained folded, and in the depths of my pocket for some days ere I enjoyed their perusal. In fact, cogitations upon the past, and the realities of the present, had driven them from my mind.

Our quarters on board the steamer were most uncomfortable, crowded on the bow deck, and penned in on all sides by the military guard, with three horses among us, and the deck covered with their litter, upon which we must either lie or stand, while the weather was very cold, and we had nothing but our own clothes to protect us from it. The horses were restive, and often endangered the lives and limbs of those who essayed to find a bed near them. Our baggage had been piled on our inner skirt; Parker and myself availed ourselves of its contiguity, and settled down upon it, where I endeavored to lull myself to sleep, but vainly, for whenever I fell into a drowse, the piercing cold communicated by the iron on my bare wrists, would suddenly arouse me to painful sensations; and the chains upon my leg kept that in a state of numbness. Yet these were not evidences sufficient to remind us of our debasement.

The *comfort* of sitting was too much for us to enjoy in the presence of a stripling ensign of the 93d regiment of the Queen's Own L. I., who happened to pass and observe us. He instantly ordered the sentry

to "prick up the d——d rebels with his bayonet, and make them stand." We regarded not the order, supposing it given only in the exuberance of vinolent spirits; but this petty officer, early schooled in the brutal policy of his government, enraged at the slight his authority had suffered, drew his sword, and swore he "would force up the villains, and send them forward among the herd." But I could not discern the necessity of resigning my seat and standing, during a cold and tedious night, therefore remained unmoved. This obstinacy created an altercation that brought to the deck Commander Major Arthur, who, before any enquiry, gave the usual order to "shoot down the prisoners if any suspicious movements were observed;" and then demanded "the cause of the row." The officer replied "it was [my] refusal to obey his orders and move forward." "Does he!" returned the redoubted Arthur, "I wish I was empowered to do so, I would rid the world of them all at once, and thus relieve the British government of further trouble with them."

The master of the boat came to his assistance, with language more fitting a Billingsgate Calender than this letter, of which Parker got his full share. I still remained sitting, and pointed out the impossibility of finding room, even for standing, forward of where we were, when the civic officer, in whose immediate charge we were placed, interfered, and begged we might be suffered to remain. It was "granted," and the valiant Major, with his Billingsgate champion, returned to

their cabin and their cups. The mystery was explained by the sentry, "on the sly," who said, "you should have arisen when the officer ordered it, and then you could have sat down again, and nothing more would have been said. He only wanted to show his authority." Well! well! thought I, if we must receive such marks of the power of every petty minion we meet, our *restraint* will not be *pleasant*.

We glided down the waters of the Ontario and St. Lawrence with speed, and found ourselves at a wharf at Prescott very early the following morning. Here lay the small steamboat Dolphin, with a piece of brass ordinance mounted on her bow, and a company of volunteers on board. About eight we were transferred to her, and prepared to descend the Long Sault rapids. The morning was extremely cold, and we suffered much, being entirely unsheltered. The day, however, became fine as the sun approached the meridian, and we enjoyed with considerable delight the passage down this noble river, though the novelty was interrupted by the clanking of chains, and the pains from our wristlets. As we approached the head of the Long Sault, we beheld the river narrowing to a very contracted channel, down which "the waters of many lakes" whirled with a dizzying rapidity that seemed to betoken destruction to our frail bark. "Its war of waters tumultuous roar," and the giddy whirl of its eddies, appeared to yawn in terror upon us, and the master and crew were palsied with fear, for this was the first attempt at "riding the Sault" with a craft of that kind,

and only risked through the imperious necessity of a passage boat below, to replace one scuttled and sunk by the patriots.

However, we "threaded the passage" safely, rounded to at the foot to wood, and then continued to Cornwall, where we arrived about two P. M., having accomplished the distance in an incredible short space of time. It was said then, that the distance of nine miles was run in fifteen minutes. In passing down the St. Lawrence, the rumor of excitement was verified by multitudes of militia collected and drilling upon its banks, who generally saluted us with loud huzzas, roused, probably, by the cannon on our deck. We passed unanswering, save in one solitary case, when Mr. J. J. McNulty (the poor fellow is now dead) sprang upon the cannon, dragging his boon companion with him, and shouted three times, in a stentorian voice, "Hurra for the Patriots!" then leaped down amid the deafening "bravos" of his companions. We nearly paid dear for his temerity, for the sound of "Patriots," brought the musk~~oom~~oom gentry's arms to a present, but perhaps their guns were charged with something besides powder, or had "wooden flints" in them, for nothing followed. The whole line we passed evidently expected a descent, for when our boat, carrying no ensign, rounded to from the American channel of the Long Sault, or approached near the shores, the banded militia fled in evident panic, or skulked to watch the movements of the boat.

The rain commenced falling in torrents just before we reached Cornwall, to which we were exposed with-

out remedy. As soon as we touched the wharf, the commandant of the station, Col. Turner, (who sported a Waterloo Scargeant's Medal on the outside breast of his coat,) was, with his officers, called to hold a council in the cabin of the boat, which, after an hour spent in consultation, determined on detaining us there for a few days, until the "rising below should be quelled," which *we* hoped would succeed to the hearts content of the participators, and visit Cornwall ere many hours. Col. Turner's corps were turned out in the rain to guard us to the jail, who were a set of as ragged, and as hideous looking wretches as I ever beheld in the shape of men.

When they were ranked in double file, the gallant colonel, from under the awning of the boat, ordered them to "load with ball cartridge, and shoot down every man who showed the slightest disposition to escape." Our luggage was thrown upon the dock, that the boat might be used to carry men to the scene on the other shore, of the "high spirited war" that was being waged against defenceless women and children, and the conflagration of their houses, barns and stores. When all were prepared for marching, and the colonel on horseback, he took the opportunity of haranguing his "noble fellows," in the true spirit of an upstart British swaggart, with no other apparent design than to impress us with high ideas of his consequence, and keep us longer exposed to the pitiless storm. I am sure he could not have taken a course better calculated to exemplify a mean cowardly heart, than the one he adopted. And not a man among us gave him cred-

it for any thing more than what he really was worth. There is no conceiving how long we might have been subjected to this detention, had not the rain cooled his garrulity, and benefitted us by producing the order to "march."

The road was uncommonly bad, and it was with exertions painful in the extreme, that we drew our chained limbs along, encumbered with a part of our baggage, which we were told we must carry or lose; the remainder, however, was subsequently sent after us. We finally reached the jail, a large brick building, three quarters of a mile from the landing, with an imposing appearance upon the outside. But inside, like the Jewish sepulchres, "filled with dead men's bones," alias, filth, vermin, and a number of the drunken orange soldiery, thrown in the cells for a few hours, to give time for their superabundant spirits to evaporate. Indeed, a shelter of any kind, would have been, at that time, peculiarly grateful; so when we were ushered into the large dirty hall, we were not disposed to murmur at the absence of all comfort, a "roaring fire excepted," which soon, however made us feel the consequences of a sudden transition from severe cold to intense heat. The badness of the roads, and inclemency of the weather, had fatigued us so effectually, that we were fain to throw ourselves upon the floor, as soon as we entered. Our clothes, saturated with rain, steaming in the heat, rendered our condition horribly disagreeable; and the iron cleaves upon our wrists had also caused them to swell in such a manner, that on some the iron was buried in the flesh,

causing excruciating pain, as well the inconvenience of retaining upon us our upper garments. You can scarce form an idea of our circumstances; mine were as follows—In the first place, I had on a cloak with my manacled arm through the arm hole; then an over and an under coat, all of which I had thrown off as far as I could, leaving them hanging on my right arm. Parker had done the same with two coats, thus we had four wet coats and a cloak dangling between us, no slight inconvenience, you will say, for persons fatigued as we were. We felt it so; indeed, we thought it unendurable, and applied to some young officers, who out of curiosity visited us during the night, to have the cuffs removed. They brought the colonel to see us, but instead of his sympathy being excited by our sufferings, he swore he would add to, rather than diminish our irons, or decrease our “deserved punishments.”

I felt enraged at his inhumanity, and declared, if my life was spared, and liberty regained, I would meet him again, when he would dearly rue his brutality to defenceless prisoners. He muttered curses upon my insolence, and departed. Nothing daunted, we next sent for the military surgeon, who came, examined our wrists, and said “it was indeed too bad,” but he had no power to act, further than to advise a release from the cuffs, which he did, without effect. And we poor slaves of caprice must spend the night with all our wet clothes and irons on, upon the floor, without bed or bedding, rest or sleep. A cup of tea from the provident store of Mrs. Wait, revived drooping nature

a little. Indeed, it was with a blessing upon her head that we partook of it at this time, and subsequently; on the morning following, a very good breakfast, of beef steak and tea, was furnished by the good natured Dutch jailer, who, while we were eating, entertained us with some of his complaints against the government. He said his father had been ruined by the government, and so had himself; still he thought he ought to be loyal. About eleven, the Deputy Sheriff who accompanied us from Kingston, made his appearance, for the first time since landing, offering the inclemency of the weather as an excuse, forgetting our greater inconvenience in the mean time. After he had examined our wrists, he concluded to take the cuffs off for the day; but a "rumor of invasion" came while he was in the act; he therefore reinvested us with them immediately, permitting us, however, to throw off our upper garments, and have them put on transversely, viz., my left hand to Mr. P's right, while my right leg was chained to his left. Thus we remained for two days, cross ironed; yet it was a relief to the arm first invested. We therefore spent the day in comparative comfort, and enjoyed a season of refreshing prayer, with scriptural reading and a religious discourse, by Mr. Wixon, who, having but one leg, was not encumbered with irons.

The town of Cornwall, and, indeed, every part of the country, was in a state of fearful alarm and excitement. Terror was depicted in every countenance we saw—Turner's was not excepted. We were rigidly guarded, and every motion was observed; pens,

ink and paper were taken, fearing we might give information of our detention there, and a consequent rescue be attempted. Various rumors were hourly arriving, of the Patriot's success, magnified, of course, by the credulous relater. The reports were not destined for our ears; but the proximity of the council chamber, and the earnest trepidation with which the news was related, rendered it impossible for a word to escape our hearing; consequently the exaggerated accounts raised our anticipations and hopes to high expectations.

On the second day of our continuance at Cornwall, the steamboat returned with a load of volunteers; and two hundred stand of arms were distributed to them from the door of the jail. These additional men, it was expected, would effectually secure the place against the expected attack; yet the officers who gave out the arms, expressed fears, in a consultation, of these very guns being turned against themselves. Indeed, I believe if the place had been attacked by a very few resolute men, not only would it have been carried, but nearly all the militia would have become insurgents.

On Monday, a number of the young militia officers visited us, and were very communicative; they repeatedly intimated a hope, nay, an assurance, that we would not be retained as prisoners much longer. Our cuffs were removed for a few hours during the day; but, out of *compassion*, were locked on for the night. We laid down early, in our clothes; and the orders were strict against having any lights burning in the jail that night, fearing they might operate as beacons,

to the attacking party. About ten an alarm was sounded, and we, the poor slaves to caprice and terror, were ordered for removal instantly. But before we could get on our overclothes, the order for immediate march was countermanded; still we were to hold ourselves ready to move at a moment's warning. The authorities knew not what to do, and were distracted in their councils, by the arrival of one express after another, bringing intelligence of the "Prescott invasion," and various others, only known by report.

Rumors of an intended assault upon their own town, induced them to get rid of us at all hazards. A retrograde movement was not practicable; it was therefore determined to go on toward Quebec, and run the gauntlet with the "rebels of Lower Canada." But the greatest difficulty now presented was, the procuring an adequate guard to accompany us, the fear of the Patriot forces ran so high. However, about ten A. M. the escort was ready, and we again embarked. Our boat, this time, was the "Neptune," Capt. Bullock, who received us on the bow, where we stood, or sat, on the bare deck, for the whole day, in a drizzling rain—being refused permission to go under the promenade, where was unoccupied space sufficient to accommodate a hundred or more persons. We touched for a moment at Lancaster, where the excitement prevailed in as great a degree as at Cornwall; and as the dusky clouds of evening were falling about us, we approached the low, muddy looking Coto Du Lac, just within the precincts of Lower Canada, and the spot where Mrs. Wait so providentially met Sir George, on her

return from Quebec. As we touched the wharf, lawyer McDonald, of St. Catharines, stepped on board; and after inquiring of my family, and my probable destiny, told me of the defeat of the habitans, with immense slaughter—the sacking and burning of their villages—the destruction of families and property; and ended with saying, “that’s the way! To destroy the crows, you must burn their nests, and exterminate their young.” Inhuman idea, thought I; yet it might be well if it had not been suggested to other minds than his; for the highest men, in this portion of the British realm, possessed the same barbarous opinion, and acted upon it to the fullest extent. This policy was simply but forcibly illustrated by a poor fellow, the pilot of the boat, who said, with tears upon his cheeks, in his broken English, “de poor woman and de child ran in de woods from the soldiers, and by’m by they come back—no house, no home, no pork, no bread! What can dey do? Lie down in de snow, freeze, starve, die! Oh mon Diëu!”

From the village we were taken, in French “tumbrils,” to the old fort, some distance below. Two pair (four men) were placed in each cart, and drawn by one horse. The roads were so muddy and bad, that it was often necessary for us to get down, and extricate the empty cart from the ruts. Still the inhuman guard thought proper to add his weight to the already too heavy load, which was sure to create tumultuous altercations between them and the drivers. The darkness was so extreme that it became necessary to come to a halt, until lanterns could be procured, by the light

of which we succeeded in arriving at the *old mud* fortress about eight at night, completely covered with mud; and were shown into one of the guard rooms, so small that we could not all lie or sit down at the same time; necessarily we were forced to lie upon the floor by turns, in our wet and muddy clothes, and with all our irons on. Every effort to procure food for the night was unavailing; so recourse was again had to the bag, which, with a small crust of bread, preserved from breakfast, supplied us for supper. Our management, on this occasion, was rather laughable, and I cannot omit relating it: when we had concluded upon making tea, a difficulty presented itself, as to how we should obtain hot water; but that was happily obviated, by a lucky thought of one of the number, who produced a small tin basin, in which the water was boiled, and tea made for two persons, who drank it, and retired to their couch, upon "the soft side of a plank," to make room for two others; and so on, in rotation, until toward the "end of the row," when the first retiring had to get up and give place to the last; thus occupying nearly the whole night in taking *tea*; and happy were we, too, that so much comfort was left to us. However, the next day we made up for our night of fasting. The guards were the Glengary militia, whose duty it was to maintain possession of the fort. Their wives, daughters, and sweethearts, made them a visit, bringing fruits, vegetables, and other comforts, *rarities in warrior's messes*, who sympathised in our misfortunes, and taught their friends to do so too, sharing their provisions with us, and ma-

king our situation more endurable. They were all Highlanders, and recognized in McLeod, a "genuine McLude of Skie," by his manly bearing, form, and make, which, in fact, would have done honor to the "kilts and tartans."

The aspect of affairs below, rendered our immediate progress imprudent, and we were, therefore, detained for the day.

Parker and myself were permitted to walk in the parade ground, with an armed man at our back. We passed several respectable looking Frenchmen, who saluted us with evident emotion, taking off their hats, and gazing at us with intense anxiety, and countenances distorted with agony. I "mark u the Gael," as he walked by us, and saw the tear of sympathy glisten in his eye, as our chains rattled along upon the frozen ground. I accosted him, and said, "my good fellow, you manifest a commiseration for the miseries of your fellow men, who wear the chains of our unhappy government." He understood and spoke English very well; and replied, in accents of wo, "Canada, unhappy, poor, torn to pieces, *burnt up*, by that bad tyrant, Gen. Colborne. We are very good reformers, but must turn out, or be burnt up too, like our poor neighbors, the Frenchmen." Then shaking his head, forbodingly turned away, and would say no more, notwithstanding our repeated attempts to draw him out. Toward evening, we were visited by Mr. Adams, commissariat of the station, through whose influence we were relieved of the cuffs, for the following night, and a part of our number taken to another room.

The morning of the 15th opened with a heavy wind up the river, rendering futile an attempt to proceed by water, in a derham boat, down the rapids, that intervenes between this and the village of the Cascades; consequently it was necessary to return, and pass down by land. The two passenger wagons used there, in that season of year, and several tumbrils, were pressed, into which we got and were driven off. The roads were shocking bad, and we could not go beyond a walk. We had scarcely started, before a terrible storm of rain, snow and sleet, came up, driving into our faces with unremitting violence for several hours. It completely covered us with one sheet of ice, from head to foot, giving us more the appearance of icy statues than living beings; and I am sure some of the less warmly clad felt so too. Just as we were entering the precincts of the Cedars, a small village about half way from the Coto to the Cascades, where we halted for a half hour, the 71st regiment of regulars, on their way to the Upper Province, met us, fresh from the scenes of conflagration, carnage, and ruin. Thousands of the volunteers, men from the dregs of society; and the militia, loaded with the booty and plunder of Beauharnois, followed in their wake. This scum of society, this offscouring of the Canadas, or, I might say, of the world, exhibited an inconceivably disgusting appearance. They went along, without the least order or discipline, in one confused, tumultuous mass; cursing, swearing, singing, and loudly exulting in the destruction and misery they had caused. They had pressed hundreds of French horses and carts, to trans-

port their plunder; and poor, dumb animals! they suffered severely the brutal passions of those bands of legal robbers—those enemies to order, law and right; we passed several of these horses overthrown in the mud, and undergoing an inhuman castigation, inflexible in making them rise. In some instances, the poor habitant willingly received the blows designed for his prostrate horse. This mass of human beings filled the road for miles, and I should imagine they numbered three or four thousand; and in their rear, as if to drive them onward, came our old *friend*, Major Arthur, with his staff; and a company of regulars. He rode up to the wagons, and demanded what prisoners they had? On being informed, he ordered a halt; and the prisoners to get down and proceed on foot, while he was determined to occupy the teams for his own especial use. This arbitrary desire created a deal of altercation; but our noble spirited Highlanders, were faithful to their charge; and although the gallant Major, in the heat of the dispute, dismounted in rage, breathing threats against our guards, they maintained our right to the teams, well knowing it was an utter impossibility for us to walk *several* miles, with chains dragging, to catch every protuberance on the road.

It was in utter darkness that we arrived at the Cascades, a distance of fourteen miles from the Coto. Here we were obliged to remain near an hour in the wagons, before a shelter could be obtained for us. Finally, a room, just vacated by a party of volunteer guards, was procured. They, providentially for us, left a kettle of boiled potatoes in one corner of the fire

place, which were eaten without other sauce than hunger, and only supplied about two to a man—a small supper, indeed, for men who had spent a whole day in a terrible storm, without food. The rain and sleet had congealed upon our external garments, not penetrating at all; we were, therefore, comparatively comfortable, when we threw our weary bodies upon the floor, and endeavored to betake ourselves to sleep, as well as circumstances would permit.

The storm raged with terrible fury for nearly the whole night, as if all the elements were combined to render nature frightful. It was long after I lay down ere I could compose myself to sleep; not but that I needed rest and repose, yet it was driven from me by the amount of horrors I had witnessed that day. My mind conjured up scenes of wretchedness and death, by exposure to the pitiless storm, of thousands of poor houseless Patriots, who, with their wives and children, had been, within the last three days, driven to seek a hiding place in the woods, from the persecutions of their fiend-like pursuers. I saw them vainly endeavoring to find shelter from the blast by skulking beneath the trunks of trees and the leafless boughs of the forest oak, without food, without clothing, and daring not, under the fear of death, to return to the spot where their homes *had* been, but *now* were *not*. Oh, I felt as if each new burst of the tempest carried grim death to some hapless victim, and every fresh gust of the roaring wind sounded a funeral knell for some unhappy soul, severed from its clay tenement by the hand of barbarity! Oh, how sad were

their sufferings as pictured to my mind! yet might not those very persons who were then shrieking in the last struggles of nature, be in a more enviable situation than I, who was condemned to not only share every vicissitude of bodily sufferance, but undergo every infamy, disgrace, debasement and mental distress, that could be heaped upon man. Yet I saw myself borne up through all I had yet experienced with unanticipated fortitude. However, had all things been opened at once to my view, and *all* the evils I had felt been poured down on my devoted head at once, despair, or at least, despondency would have been my lot. Even then I knew not the amount I had yet to endure, and well for me that the dim uncertain future was shaded by the curtain of merciful silence, so that when it was withdrawn, and slowly as I could bear, came sorrow and severe anguish, the spirit was enabled to abide all, for it knew not the worst.

At a late hour my melancholy musings gave way to the sacred balm of religion, which calmed my heart's turbulent passions, and checked its transports of grief. I heartily commended my sleeping companions, with all suffering humanity, to the care of kind heaven, and throwing myself unreservedly upon its proffered protection, sunk into a placid repose. But repose could not last, the clanking of my companions' chains, and the pains arising from my own, aroused me at a very early hour to recollection and misery. While awaiting the passage boat, we observed several flat-bottomed boats approaching from the opposite shore, where the greatest destruction had taken place, loaded

with cattle, produce, and household goods of every description, though the wind blew still quite fresh.

About 12, the steamer *Dragon* arrived from Beauharnois, also freighted with every sort of plunder, as well as a number of militia, part of the army we met the day previous, who had remained behind to glut the spirit of destruction by an extra act of conflagration and ruin. By this boat we received a supply of provisions, which, you may well suppose, we greatly needed, having fasted for the last thirty hours.

As soon as the *Dragon* had discharged her ill-gotten cargo, we were transferred to her. She lay at the point made by the confluence of the Grand Ottawa and the St. Lawrence, two of the noblest rivers of British America. They afford, for various divisions of this vast country, great natural facilities for commerce and manufactures. The scene was a grand one, and gave rise to speculations on the probable greatness of the Canadas, at some future day, when they would have effectually "arisen in their might," and shaken off the tyrant's yoke, and paralysed the hand of oppression. I never did, nor do I now, doubt the ultimate consummation of such an event.

The boat soon put off, and left far behind these prospects predictive of ultimate greatness, and Canada's elevation soon gave place to pictures of a vividly opposite caste. I remained on deck with my yoke fellow, (for the day was tolerably serene,) to witness the noble, the beautiful scenery, on the banks of the grand St. Lawrence.

A shudder, a feeling akin to horror shot through my frame, as my eyes were first directed to the yet smoking ruins of a proscribed Canadian's homestead. Every building that might have afforded the slightest shelter to man or beast, was burnt to the ground. Every tree cut down, and every particle of food destroyed or carried away. We soon swept past this mark of a tyrant's displeasure, to the view of another scene still more heart rending; it appeared to have been the residence of a person of considerable wealth, for numerous piles of smoking embers were observed, which, from appearances, betokened the building to have been of no slight magnitude. Though all had now vanished but the ashes, and the poor forlorn destitute beings who had once made their roofs echo with the sounds of gladness, perhaps of sacred worship, had just ventured from their hiding place, and were apparently hunting about the premises if perchance the remorseless incendiaries had left undestroyed one morsel whereby a raging hunger might be appeased. There stood a mother and five children, vainly weeping over the ruins of their home, as if their tears could restore what they had lost; no doubt a husband, parent, brother, or friend were weltering in their own blood, or if living, groaning in irons, reserved in dungeons, as victims for the insatiable gallows, or exiled from their families, whose sufferings they could not know the extent of, and distracted in the knowledge that Sir John Colborne was relentless in his furious revenge.

Oh, how many of these brave, honest and virtuous Canadians have suffered in themselves and families, all the refined cruelty, insult, indignity and aggression that the mind of an Aylmar, a Gosford with his colleagues, and a Colborne, with his merciless horde of freebooting ravishers, could invent. And for what? Because they entertained laudable desires of exercising their restricted prerogatives in curbing, as far as was in their power, the avarice and licentiousness of the arbitrary governors. Because they, in youth's bright visions, beheld what was due to humanity, and longed to enjoy the fruits of their own industry, in peace and in liberty. Because they have looked across the narrow waters, and envied the happy freedom of their neighbors, where each could eat his own bread, beneath his own roof, amid his happy family, in joy and content. Where he could look about him and say, "these are mine, and none can dispossess me: I can enjoy my own, undisturbed by intestine commotion, murderous factions, or an avaricious despot's glance."

Amid these sad meditations, as if to heighten the melancholy, a cry of "look yonder!" directed my attention to the opposite shore, (eight or ten miles distant,) where the work of destruction was beginning anew. The flames were just bursting from several houses and barns, hitherto unscathed. At that moment, the steward of the boat came up to where we were, and I enquired of him why such devastation was still continuing when the insurrection was supposed to be wholly quelled. He replied that a "company of the blood-hounds of Colborne were going the

rounds with his orders, to visit every hamlet and farmstead, and whenever the male proprietor could not be found, to burn and destroy his possessions without remorse." Horrid barbarity! cruel order! by which thousands of hapless victims were rendered roofless and foodless in the commencement of a North American winter.

We touched at Beauharnois, a small village, formerly containing several hundred houses, but now only filled with smouldering ruins, exhibiting the traces of the demon of destruction. Here, but the day before, under the eye of Colborne, every excess had been perpetrated; houses reduced to ashes; property of every description, and furniture, were broken up and strewed the streets. Women of every grade, age, or condition, insulted, violated, murdered. Col. McDonald, of the Glengary militia, and sheriff of Kingston, writes as follows regarding the destruction of this village: "We proceeded towards Beauharnois by a forced march, burning and laying waste the country as we went along, and it was a most distressing and heart-rending scene, to see this fine settlement completely destroyed, and the houses burned and laid in ashes; and I understand the whole country around St. Charles experienced the same. The wailing of the women and children, in beholding their houses in flames and property destroyed, their husbands, brothers, fathers and sons dragged along prisoners, and such of them as did not appear were supposed to be at the rebel camp." In the destruction of this and other places, the orange faction were the most prominent

actors. And from this same compact of state and orangeism have sprung two thirds of the woes that the distracted Canadas have endured. All other scenes of modern warfare, even among the barbarous nations of the east and south, were faint pictures of cruelty when compared to the atrocities in Lower Canada, in 1838. The heroes of St. Dennis, St. Charles, St. Eustache, Beauharnois, and many other places, can boast of "heroic deeds" unparalleled in the annals of modern history, for their warfare was carried on principally against defenceless women and children. They will walk forth in this world with the mark of villains and murderers on their foreheads, and go down to the grave unhonored and unwept! while their conduct brands the government they serve with ignominy and deserved contumely.

The officers of our boat entered pretty deeply into the chance of speculation, offered by the scattered property of the murdered and exiled families of this ill-fated town. The deck was piled with goods and household furniture, of rare and rich qualities, and several horses, that had been brought to the wharf and sold there for one dollar per head, were carried, on board, to Lachine.

I saw a few of the French, who had been left, for some cause or another. They appeared extremely dejected, and forlorn. Oh! what bitter pangs I experienced at the sight; and glad was I to have the order given for departure. I prevailed on Parker to go below, (for the bow cabin, or "steerage," was allotted to us,) where I endeavored to shut out the thought of

what I had witnessed within the last two hours, and drown my sadness in the oblivion of sleep. But in this, "I had reckoned without my host;" for the atmosphere was humid and cold—such as was calculated to totally repel sleep or rest. At first, I was at a loss to account for it, and the fetid smell of the cabin; but was soon informed, that this was the boat that had been taken, a few days previous, at Beautharnois, by the French Patriots, when it was scuttled and sunk; and but two days since, raised and repaired.

The oppressiveness of the air soon drove us to the deck again, when I, to my no small gratification, discovered that we had passed the "proscribed districts." I was highly delighted with the fine scenery on the banks of this wonderful thoroughfare. It was not such as would strike the romantic beholder with awe, or with wonder; but its apparent unobtrusiveness, with occasional glimpses of distant mountains, and adjacent forests, were well calculated to excite, in the mind, a pleasing sensation of delight—a sort of buoyant gladness, stimulated by the appearance of the landscape, and the neatness of the small French cottages, contrasted with the magnificent river, on whose pellucid bosom our boat floated like a thing animate. These fine, comfortable looking fields and farms, hardly assorted with the ruined estates we had just passed. The demon of destruction had not visited here.

As near as could be judged, in such a bleak season, the fields, and whole country, was in an unique state of culture, and the appearance would have been congenial to an enthusiastic admirer of a grand uniformi-

ty of natural and artificial scenery united. But I must again bid you adieu, and defer, for my next, a continuation of our passage toward Quebec.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER VII.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

September, 1810.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: Our next landing was at Lachine, a small village, nine miles from Montreal; between which places the navigation of the river is impeded, by a succession of small falls or rapids; around which there is a canal cut, only navigated by small batteaux, drawn by horses. We disembarked about sunset, amid a large concourse of people, who supposed us to be of the prisoners taken at Beauharnois, and consequently loaded us with insult and scoffs. We paid but little attention to these noisy burlesques of the human race; and I felt, as I remarked to the civil officers who walked by us, that such *gratulations* were the most honorable we could receive from men who were evidently a part of the sackers of Beauharnois, and the murderers of men, women, and children. With the setting of the sun, the clouds arose, and a terrible storm of rain and wind commenced, that continued to rage for some hours, then settled down into a cold snow storm. The batteau into which we got was open, and towed

by one horse, and managed by two Frenchmen and a boy. The men were driven about like dogs; and dare not murmur, for there was no redress. Several clumsy, inefficient looking locks intervene on this short canal; at each of which, stoppages and delays were inevitable. At about nine P. M. we arrived at Montreal, and run into one of the basins, where we lay exposed to the snow and cold for some hours, awaiting the reappearance of one of the civil officers, who had gone on from Lachine, to procure lodging for us. But he did not make his appearance, having found some friend, whose cup proved too potent for his weak head to admit of his moving abroad that night, much to our discomfort. After waiting for some hours, the remaining civil officer determined on moving around to the garrison, and landing on the beach; which was not effected without much difficulty and danger. He then left us standing there, in the storm, and went away to find a lodging. He did not return for more than an hour, when he took us into a small guard room, in the middle of the city, leaving the baggage upon the shore, subject to the storm, and to plunder; the latter of which was only prevented by the darkness. When we were introduced to our room, the great town clock was striking twelve; and in about two hours, our baggage followed. The space allotted to us, was what had formerly been the inner room of a lawyer's office, eight by sixteen feet, with a "military deal bed," calculated for eight persons to sleep on. In this small hole, it was impossible to sit down, as it was scarce practicable to stand. We were all horror-stricken at

the prospect of spending the night in such an unhappy situation—some sunk to the floor, wearied under a load of frozen clothes, and care. I have often wondered how it could possibly happen, that we did not all despair at once, and settle down in a fatal despondency; but even in that suffocating situation, the jest went round, and the affected laugh sounded with a vain effort “to drive dull care away.” I thought of Virgil’s picture of a cell in the infernal region, and laughed at the idea fancy had conjured up, while I longed for a light to realize it. A light at last came, and showed imagination’s sketch no exaggeration.

The light was in the hand of the Town Major, who was forcibly struck with the scene; for an exclamation of extreme surprise broke from him the moment the door opened, and he beheld twenty-three men, chained and hand cuffed, pent up in a room where twelve would find it difficult to lie down. Some were lying stretched upon the cold floor, sinking through sheer exhaustion, and the closeness of the place we were in. Others were standing over them, leaning against the wall, happy in such support. Some were loudly calling for water, which could not be supplied, as the guard had but little in, and could not leave the station to go for more.

The sight of the Town Major’s sympathising face, and the civilities offered by the few gentlemen who accompanied, relieved us of much of the despondency that was clouding our hearts. He left us with an assurance, that water should be immediately supplied, and other lodgings provided, for at least a part of the

number. A pail of water came, and was handed in; but, alas, no cup! no, not a tin canteen could be found to drink out of. I will leave you to imagine what course we pursued in regard to what every man among us was almost dying for, and which was actually larger than we could find space for. The pail, nevertheless, was soon emptied, and afforded a seat or footstool for some one. After remaining in this crowded and fainting state for two hours or more, we were partially relieved, by the removal of eight to other quarters. Nothing was supplied for food, and all we could raise, was a small quantity of bread and meat, I had providently saved from our meal, on the steamboat. We partook of that morsel with a devotional gratitude to God, who giveth all things; then commending ourselves to His care, sought sleep upon the bare floor.

For my part, I fell at once into a deep slumber, and dreamed of home's happy fireside; heard the guileless laugh, and felt the playful, *stolen* kiss of affection. Often, since my feet have been debarred "tracing the woods, the lawns, the flowery meads;" and my eyes from viewing aught but misery, and wo, and wretchedness; and my heart from feeling any thing but a loneliness, hopelessness, anguish, and deep insult, I have felt happy, aye, vividly happy, in a review of the bright and joyous visions of midnight. Yes! though my head lay upon the hard floor, and all my bones were aching with the pains of wearied out nature, and all comfort forbidden, yet a kind, overruling Providence has so ordered it, that no despot, however powerful, can chain the independent mind. In the forget-

fulness of sleep, it will revert to the joyous scenes of former days, that leave upon its tablets, blissful sensations to engage the waking hours, and draw it forcibly from corroding thoughts.

I must not omit to mention a circumstance that occurred here, though trifling, as it had a great weight in bringing about a subsequent occurrence, that operated much to my discomfort. During the night, before any had been removed, Vernon and Gemmel, who were coupled together, determined on procuring more ease and liberty, broke the lock that fastened their cuffs, and began to saw the chain, when they were interrupted by the Town Major's entrance. They were, after going on board the steamer for Quebec, punished for it, by being forced to wear another pair, for some hours, after the remainder had been relieved.

The next morning brought the civil officers, whose flinty natures, all our sufferings from wet clothing, and swollen arms, could not move to a single act of pity. We vainly entreated a removal of the "wrist bands," only long enough to admit of our throwing off our upper garments. They departed without even administering one comfortable word, or one morsel of bread to the calls of hunger." At noon, came a few of the officers of the twenty-fourth regiment, who, after remarking that we were "fine looking fellows, and would well besit the British uniform," enquired whether we had any "complaints to make." We exhibited our wrists, but with that they could not interfere: we then told of our long fast and thirst, which could not be remedied, unless they thought proper to order other-

wise. They replied, that Governor Colborne was there, and we would, most probably, be delivered up to his charge; consequently, until the delivery was made, and arrangements completed, we must remain in "statu quo." However, they promised a meal from their own mess, in the absence of other provisions; yet it was three P. M. before it came. While we were devouring it, the order for our removal, forthwith, to the steamboat, arrived; and we were directed to pocket our uncaten provisions. The men who had been separated from us for the night, rejoined us. They had been taken to the garrison, where the soldiers shared their messes and beds with them.

A numerous guard received us at the door, where a vast concourse was rapidly collecting, to "look at the Upper Canadians." Followed by them, we were marched down Notre Dame street to the wharf, and embarked on board the "British North America," bound for Quebec.

A variety of feeling seemed to actuate the multitude; for some expressed a sympathy, while others mocked; some pitied, while others derided; and many implored us to maintain a "good courage, as it was a glorious cause we were suffering in."

We were placed in the bow cabin, where was burning, in a large stove, a roaring fire. This was exhilarating to us, who had long been without so great a *luxury*. Through the kind influence of some gentlemen passengers, and the Captain, we were released from the torturing manacles, and enjoyed a respite from pain; an alleviation that weary nature profited

by. At an early hour we turned into our bedless berths; and for the first time, since leaving Fort Henry, passed a night of uninterrupted repose. We awoke in the morning, greatly refreshed and invigorated, though with a strong appetite for a sound meal, that did not remain long unappeased.

Immediately after partaking our breakfast we hurried to the deck, and hailed the bright sun with uncommon cheerfulness.

The ride down this part of the St. Lawrence, was a glorious and a pleasant one, and I enjoyed the prospects with unsurpassed delight. About noon the heights bounding the plains of Abraham were visible, up whose rocky shelves the bold and adventurous Wolfe wended his way to glory and to death; and where the valorous and gallant Montcalm, poured out the red streams of life, in defence of the chivalry of France.

Every word I had read of this celebrated spot, animatingly recurred to my memory; and my bosom burned to view, more closely, the landscape of those plains, richer in soul-stirring incident to me, than would be the classic grounds of Italy. I could have gazed, for hours, with veneration, upon the monument that bears, jointly, the names of those two heroes; and which not only perpetuates their memory, but also impressions of the former power, chivalry, and contests of two great nations. The magnanimity, on the part of one, however, I felt, by a glance at my chains, was dwindled down to a low, revengeful despotism; and as a counterpoise to this lasting monument of *discolored*

fame, pillars that would hereafter be erected to the memory of the self-devoted Lount, Mathews, Morrow, and many others, would stand as still more enduring monuments of her shame.

The ice had delayed us so much, that, instead of arriving at the usual hour of six in the morning, it was one P. M. when we approached the wharf. Our presence attracted a vast multitude, who betrayed the same varied feelings we had seen exhibited at Toronto and Montreal. But here let me say, to the honor of the habitans, that I did not witness a single gibe or insult proceed from any wearing the garb of the French; but, on the contrary, I observed, in all their countenances, that mute, expressive sympathy, which always cheers the wounded hearts of men wearing the chains of unjust oppression. I even heard them stoutly upbraid those who had raised their voices in unmerited derision; and I doubly esteemed them for their devotional Patriotism and sympathy.

No disposition to get up more than a hiss was apparent until we had just emerged within the gate, when a ragged, contemptible wretch, with an Irish accent and an orange badge, came up to Parker and myself, who were walking in the rear, and swore we "were just the men to take the place of his renegade countryman, Theller, and the d——d Yankee sympathizer, Dodge," who, it appears, had made a remarkable escape from the "impregnable citadel." The name was caught up by a hundred voices, and echoed, with various epithets of contempt and applause. One indi-

vidual near me, wished in his heart we "might make as good an exit from the walls of Quebec as they did, God bless them!"

The streets were narrow, and so thronged with people curious to see us, that it was a difficult matter for the regulars to force a passage through; while it was with the utmost toil and pain that we dragged our chained limbs up the icy streets, that enter the city with considerable acclivity. I looked at the frowning towers and the well mounted batteries as we passed, and admired the strength as well as the care manifested to guard this ancient city from the attacks of its enemies. I had but little chance for observation, but what I did see of the buildings, gave me no favorable impression of its wealth or cleanliness; and from the compressed state in which the houses stand, and the narrowness of the streets, one would suppose the city lacked room for its inhabitants.

At length, after a weary march of an hour, we "fetched up" at the door of the old City Jail, where Mr. Jeffries, the keeper, met and led us to a large room in the north wing, with a row of dismal looking cells on either side. I had supposed that Cape Diamond was the place destined for our reception, but was soon undeceived by the muster and delivery of our *noble selves* to the Sheriff of Quebec, who proceeded, instanter, to divest our wrists of the cuffs, which had been put on again on landing, after a respite down from Montreal.

A cup of tea and a piece of coarse bread was offered us for supper. Several gentlemen came in during

the evening to see and converse with us—particularly a couple of editors, Tories of course, as all independent and liberal papers had been suppressed, while “their editors were locked up.” Before retiring, or rather, at eight, the jailor came in, accompanied by two turnkeys, one bearing two or three large bunches of keys, and the other a large hammer. The hammer was to us a welcome sight, for we supposed it was for the purpose of knocking off our chains; but in this we were mistaken, as the bearer forthwith proceeded to sound every iron bar constituting the guard to the windows, a precautionary step counselled by the then late fortunate escape through the grated windows of the citadel. Armed guards were doubled about the prison, and one walked continually under each cell window, occasionally raising himself up and peering in, lest we might be engaged in something *wrong*. Our bedding here became very useful, as that supplied was too scanty for the cold weather.

The next morning, a large pot of oatmeal gruel, with a quart of molasses, and a half pound of bread, was brought for our breakfast. The gruel but few of our number could partake of, having never before seen such “stuff” substituted for provision. It was soon changed for something more palatable at the instance of some unknown friends, who generously offered to foot the difference. The sheriff kindly acceded to our repeated desire, and freed us from the iron incumbrances which we had worn without intermission for ten days. At the same time, he intimated, as a *probable* event, a removal to England, provided a passage

could be obtained for us; yet that, on account of the lateness of the season, was very doubtful. I wrote by return of the Kingston Deputy, to Mrs. Wait, informing her that I had no doubt she would next hear from me in England. Each person prepared his letters of farewell, and then commenced a general ablution of person and clothing, preparatory to further measures; knowing that if we were sent on, it would be prematurely.

While incarcerated in Quebec, the nine persons who had availed themselves of the privilege granted by an "ex post facto" law, and petitioned for transportation instead of standing the "fearful trial," served upon the sheriff a protest against the sentence being carried into full effect, and employed an attorney to attend to the affair for them. It proved of no avail. Those of us who had undergone a trial in Niagara, deemed it more politic to rest our cases for the present, and immediately on arrival in England, throw ourselves upon the justice and good feeling of that government, rather than make the slightest appeal to the equity of a man whose fraudulent and dishonest measures had conduced much to produce the rebellion in Upper Canada, and whose arbitrary proceedings during a three months administration had filled Lower Canada with blood and murder, with conflagration and ruin.

For my own part, I had not the slightest idea of going farther than England, and would prefer crossing thither to remaining subject to the Provincial authorities for the winter, therefore hailed the news with eager delight, when, on the 20th Nov., the sheriff (Mr.

Sewell) informed us that our passage was engaged, and the only necessary delay was to give time for fitting up a "cabin" to stow us away in. I wrote again to U. C., without the least uneasiness, confident of returning free within a year at least, particularly if I was held there until Mrs. Wait should arrive, whom I felt assured of meeting there in the spring. But the sequel will show how sadly misplaced was my confidence in their justice and clemency.

Providentially, we had a little money remaining, with which we laid in what necessary sea stores was deemed most indispensable. The prisoners could not all command means to supply what was actually necessary, and none but Mr. Parker, had more than sufficient for a very small stock. Our removal from Fort Henry having been so sudden, that no time was given to communicate our necessities to our friends, who could have provided what we wanted. I remembered the kind sympathy shown by the Lord Bishop Mountaine to Mrs. Wait, on a former occasion, and wrote him expressive of my gratitude. He was absent from his residence, but his chaplain, Rev. George Makie, came to see me, and brought a number of Testaments, Prayer Books, and other religious volumes, which he begged I would distribute among my companions. I gratefully accepted his kindness, and have brought many of them with me to this country, where publications of every kind are very scarce and dear; and I hope they will be serviceable in moralizing the wretched inhabitants, for I can assure you there is indeed much necessity for it. Some of our number

were also destitute of proper clothing, and an appeal was therefore made, but vainly, to the authorities; yet successfully to individual sympathy. The supply was all that was actually necessary to shield them from the cold, but no regard was had to appearance.

On the 22d, the sheriff informed us that we might prepare, as that day we should embark. He hoped we would find our passage an agreeable one, but was fearful we would suffer unnecessary restraint, "as Captain Morton is greatly terrified, for he imagines you to be a parcel of *dare-devils*, capable of undertaking anything, and I fear that will be a cause of not a little inconvenience to you." So said Sewell, and such we found was the truth. In answer to a question, he said, "the quarters designed for your accommodation have been examined by a board of magistrates, (or directors) who pronounced them proper and comfortable, and so they ought to be too, for the owner gets £25 per head for taking you 'home,' and furnishing you with provisions." He also informed us that "a number of French felons, of the worst class, whose crimes were theft, burglary and highway robbery, were to go in the same ship. You will, of course, for your own credit, have no communication with them, as they are bound together by the various ties of evil and corrupt associations, while they would feel no scruple in stealing the last morsel you had to eat. They have been addicted to every vice under heaven from infancy; and with some of them this is the third sentence." Such was the sheriff's picture of beings the Governor, Sir John Colborne, had selected as companions for us

to England, for the purpose, no doubt, of throwing upon our characters appearances of deeper stigma.

The city was filled with rumors regarding the unprecedented escape of Theller and Dodge, from the hitherto impregnable fort. "But Yankees are the *devils* for liberty, and iron grates, stone walls, or bayonets can not detain them from it." They have achieved a wonderful deed; they desired freedom, they strove for it, and they gained it; and may they enjoy it for ever! We were informed "the authorities were well convinced the plan never could have prospered but through prompt aid from without." Suspicion had rested upon the guard, but that was allayed by the fact of the sentinel being so thoroughly drugged; and "hundred-eyed fame" implicated many a good man, whose assistance could have been rendered in no other way than through good wishes and prayers, yet who would, had an opportunity offered, have periled their lives in accomplishing what was happily effected without them.

We saw by papers, stealthily obtained, that these two men had been received in New York at the same time with Messrs. W. Nelson, Bouchette, Desriviers, Gauvire, Marchasault, Goddeau and Viger, from Bermuda, whither they had been arbitrarily sent by Lord Durham, and from whence they returned on account of the Governor refusing to acknowledge the authority of a Canadian Governor to control or command him. A glorious, independant principle, that resulted in the liberation of five as good men as ever trod the Canadian soil. A happy meeting indeed theirs must

have been, in the joy of which we heartily participated, though captives ourselves. We exulted in their freedom, and looked confidently forward to the time when our own lot would be as happy.

We read with dejected hearts the total failure of the numerous irruptions along the whole frontier of the two Canadas, and were intensely distressed and excited by the unhappy fate of many of our personal acquaintances, who fell in the field, or were butchered in cold blood by the notorious Prince. Yet I did not mourn those who fell gallantly fighting, so much as I did the poor captives, whose fate (judging from what would have been mine, had there been no restraint exercised over Sir George Arthur) would be a thousand times worse. "They must expiate their crimes [love of freedom] on the bloody gallows." Those in the Upper Province were in the hands of "a fiend whose delight was blood," and who, for his atrocities in Van Dieman's Land, had deservedly received the cognomen of "Arthur, the Bloody Executioner." May God deliver them from his hands, and disappoint his dark revenge, was the sincere prayer of my heart when I had finished the tale of woe.

At about eleven, came the blacksmith with his hammer and anvil, accompanied by a man bearing our chains, with the sound of which we had become so familiar, that it failed to create much sensation now. We were prepared by having all our things packed away, and our clothes on to shield us from the severe cold. The chains were riveted on our legs as before, but unfortunately for Mr. Parker and myself, the one worn

and notched by Messrs. Gemmel and Vernon, as before related, fell to us. These chains and a company of regulars were not sufficient security in passing through a walled city, but the execrable cuffs must be added to our equipments, perhaps for our comfort or a peculiar indignity. Yes, it must be so! for I have never known the British government, or any of its emissaries omit these, though there was no necessity for them. We were driven from the door on a number of sleds to the dock, where a vast multitude was collected, among whom I could not perceive the slightest inclination to rudeness, but the tear of sympathy glistened in many an eye, and if I could judge by appearances, many a heart-felt prayer went up for our welfare. The ship in which we were to embark rode two miles from shore. As we seated ourselves in the yawl, where eleven felons were before us, one universal acclaim rent the air, "for our safe and speedy return to our homes." When we shoved off, I could not refrain repeating Moore's beautiful and pathetic farewell to Erin. The French in the boat sung a plaintive French ditty, that was responded to by those on shore, with such a deep pathos that the man must have possessed a heart of adamant who could have listened without tearful emotions.

But I must make the embarkation and passage the subject of another letter.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER VIII.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

November, 1840.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: The close of November is very inclement in Lower Canada; and you may, therefore, be well assured, that we anticipated no pleasure in the voyage to England, but could not possibly have dreamed of the slightest approach to the horrors we were about to be subjected to, on board the Capt. Ross, a barque lying with anchor hove apeak, awaiting our arrival. She was owned by two brothers, Messrs. Frost's, one of whom resided in Liverpool, and the other at Quebec. The latter accompanied us from the dock, and informed us that the "cabin," prepared for our reception, was fit for the Governor's use; and Capt. Morton had his instructions to treat us with forbearance, and furnish us good provisions; and, said he, "you will find yourselves uselessly encumbered with your sea stores;" and that Capt. M. was a good, kind man, who would act a generous part toward us, to whom he would introduce Mr. Parker and myself.

As soon as our yawl struck the ship, the anchor was tripped, the sails shook out, and the ship got under way.

We found some difficulty and danger in climbing up the ship's side, but were assisted by the board of Magistrates, who, with Mr. Hunter, (son-in-law, to the jailer, Mr. Jeffries,) were there before us. A hurried delivery was made of the prisoners, by the Sher-

iff, to "Capt. Digby Morton," when all left but Mr. Frost and Hunter. We were taken directly aft, where the master stood in evident tremor, which I supposed the effect of the cold, though I thought of what the Sheriff had said.

The day was uncommonly severe, and it was with no small pleasure Mr. P. and myself, who stood first, found ourselves *searched*, and turned below. But ah! what was our horror and dismay when we discovered the wretched appearance of the place we were to occupy. We called immediately to Mr. Hunter, whom we desired to look about it, and give his opinion. He did so, and said, "it was more like being calculated for beasts, than for human beings to inhabit. I will go directly on shore, and make affidavit to that effect; and, if possible, get the ship detained." He did go directly away; but his endeavors were vain, if, indeed, he intended to do any thing; for the ship was under sail, and a fair wind soon drove us onward, beyond the reach of his promised humanity.

When the whole number, including twenty-three state prisoners, and eleven felons, had been searched, and sent below together; and the trap, or hatch of iron grates locked down upon us, a scene of confusion and tumult commenced, which becgars description. I will not attempt it; but will only say, that P. and myself, being the first below, selected what we deemed the most convenient berth, and climbed quietly into it. to give room for others; for not one half could have stood up, at the same time, in the space allotted us. The shouts and curses of the felons, fighting for preemi-

nence, mingled with the clanking of chains, aided by the frigid chillness of the atmosphere, and the damp, fetid, smell, arising from the bilge water, created peculiar sensations of gloom, and dread, and forebodings. I gazed upon the face of every man near me, and saw that the same expression sat there that I fancied was upon my own. There was something working within the mind, that evidently bewildered and agitated it; and each dejected countenance spoke too plainly of an appalling presentiment. For my own part, I felt that the last trials of life had arrived. I looked about me, and was assured that existence must be short, when surrounded with such circumstances. Indeed, it had no charms, and no hopes, save in a future world. My heart sank, and every buoy vanished from my soul. *Then* I would have given worlds to have terminated my life upon the gallows, agreeable to my original sentence; for there I should have been no useless sacrifice in the cause of Patriotism. Then I should have been honored and mourned by friends; and my corpse, though mangled, would have been laved by the tears of sympathy, and perhaps received a christian interment. But here, unknown to the world, I was about to fall a victim to a death still more inhuman and disconcerting than the halter; and one that must have been dictated by private treachery. For no man would, for a moment, after entering the place, have harbored the thought of dragging on life beyond a week. I looked upon death as inevitable, and revolved in my mind every scene that must succeed, until appalled at the idea. For the first time, I shuddered

at the approach of "the monster" I had formerly unshrinkingly faced in a variety of forms.

I had heard my days numbered, and seen the gallows erected as their finisher, with scarce a wish to have it otherwise; yet now, to become a victim in the manner here in view, and my body cast into the deep, a "loathed thing," unhonored, unwept, and, perhaps, my fate never known! was a thought I could not endure. There is an undefinable something so revolting in the thought of our bodies, though "lifeless lumps," being consigned to a watery grave, without christian rites, or to a stranger's tomb, without sympathy, that it adds the climax of dismay, and unmans the soul. The mind cannot long remain in this agonising intensity. It must either shake it off with a violent effort, and rise superior to every extreme, or sink at once into a lethargic dispiritedness, when the soul must pine, and mope, and weaken, and at last utterly decay, beneath its corroding influence. The buoyant heart, or active spirit, may occasionally fall into the latter state; but reason will soon emancipate it, and revive drooping hope; for, with such, "while there is life, there is hope." But there are those, unused to disappointment, easily discouraged in mind, whose spirits, when once bent down by despair, can never revert to natural buoyancy, but will drag on their tenements imperceptibly to the grave. Of these, poor McLeod and McNulty, soon showed themselves a part; for they never recovered the shock their minds received at that embarkation; but gradually declined, both in bodily and mental vigor; and desponding to the last, dropped

almost unconsciously into the silent tomb. I strove hard to overcome the distress of mind, and dejection of spirits, that inevitably follows such practicing upon the mysteries of the brain; and sought to bear all with becoming equanimity, and proper christian fortitude. Hope did, indeed, buoy up my soul in these trying prospects; yet it was not a hope for prolonged existence here, or reenjoying the former pleasures of this life; but a heavenly, and a purely christian hope, that operated as "an anchor to the soul," and taught me to look beyond the "vale of tears," for all I could expect of pleasure and joy. I also found a consolation in reflecting upon the intensity and purity of the faith under which I had acted; and I felt not a repentant thought, or a reflective censure, for a single act of my political career. I have frequently, since my incarceration, found, that, when insulted by malice, or oppressed by inhumanity, the heart could assume a stern fortitude, almost foreign to its nature, that arouses it to a dignified *contempt* for *fate*, while it infuses into the mind proper conceptions of our relations to Him who gave us life and being, and will not suffer "a sparrow to fall to the ground unnoticed."

Although we had undergone severe pain from cold, hunger, want of rest, *taught* irons, exposure to all sorts of weather, and abuse and insult, from a set of proud aristocrats, who had evidently been raised from the lowest grade, to a station above their proper sphere; yet I can safely aver, that, at our embarkation at Quebec, commenced a series of new pains and new sufferings, far superior, in bitterness, in misery, and

in producing mental anguish, than all we had before experienced; and which continued, with but little intermission, for a year.

The Capt. Ross was a small timber vessel, loaded at Montreal, with pine and oak lumber, that had, apparently, been exposed to the winter storms, and was literally covered with ice. She was the last ship bound, that season, for England, and the only hope for our conveyance. The owner was therefore applied to, and, notwithstanding her being completely filled, he concluded to charter a small portion of her for that purpose, as thirty-four persons would not be of as great weight as the lumber he would have to displace to furnish room, but they would add many hundred per cent. to the freightage money. To gain which, (for he reasoned geometrically,) he would only be obliged to cut down a hole, twelve by fourteen feet square, in the mid-ships, through the frozen mass; and the boards cut out would answer all purposes for building up the berths. All the expense, therefore, would be a pound or two of nails. This *humane suggestion* was instantly acted upon; and behold, after two days, with *all hands turned to*, an apartment appeared, ready furnished, "that was fit for the Governor's use," and which ought for ever *to do honor to the generous originator*.

When we first "went below," into that "hole of darkness," the damp, chill atmosphere, seemed to strike *through* my whole person; creating, in every joint and vein, indescribably painful sensations; and emotions of the mind, that a frigid desolation alone

could produce. The blood appeared to curdle; and, trembling, shuddering, palpitating, shrunk back to the heart, and left the body cold and chill, benumbed and inanimate; obviously laboring vehemently, to regain natural perspiration—sensations that I cannot better portray than by supposing a person, when in free pulsation, plunged unprepared into bitter cold water. A considerable period elapsed before the body could return to its natural feeling. After a few days, this dreary chillness, gave way to an oppressive humidity—a suffocating warmth, caused by the air being so repeatedly inhaled; and by which, it became so vapid and putrid, that I cannot but wonder how humanity could endure it. Indeed, nothing but the especial favor of Providence, sustained us, and led us through that most trying scene.

Another thing that added much to the malignity of the atmosphere, was the fact, of none of our number being permitted to go to the upper deck, for any purpose whatever, during the first fifteen days; and consequently, there was a necessity for nuisances below, which were two common buckets, placed loosely upon the deck, beside some of the beds. The lurching of the ship often upset them. The effect this had upon the atmosphere and the cleanliness of the poor fellows who were forced to lie, (for I do not believe they could sleep,) on the deck, must be imagined, for it is too revolting to be described.

All who occupied the lower tier of berths, as well as the deck, frequently also, got the *benefit* of a sea water bath; for when the wind and waves were high, the

upper deck was flooded, and the water rushed down the grated hatch, (over which only a tarpauling was loosely drawn,) literally deluging the whole "apartment," until the deck was scuttled to let it off; while those occupying the upper berths were subject to the continued dripping from the lumber, of the melting ice. The bedding allowed, (beside our own,) consisted of a narrow straw mattress, and two blankets. My bed lay next the wall, and it became immediately wet, and continued so until we disembarked. A narrow shelf was occupied by poor McNulty and John Grant, one of whom could scarce maintain a place upon it; being chained together, they could not separate; therefore were obliged to lie "heads and points," or "take turns."

The deck above us was pierced on each side with a hole, two by four inches, into which were settled thick "bull's eye" glasses, forming "sky lights," that only served to make darkness more visible. They did, indeed, afford light for one or two to read for a few hours in a bright day, but the book must be held immediately under the glass. one of these glasses was directly over my berth; and consequently I spent much of the time more agreeably than many others. During fifteen days I was not out of my berth for ten minutes at a time; and still I unaccountably retained my health and spirits.

A description can scarce convey the smallest idea of the real sufferings we endured; and none, but those who have experienced a storm at sea, under similar circumstances, can conceive the disorder continually

raging among us. I have, since, particularly examined many places, built expressly for the condign punishment of incorrigible offenders. The "black hole"—the low, iron bound, flagged cell—the tread mill, and many other inventions for peculiar torture, in this land of fraud and infamy, (where a renowned clergyman, after being asked by George Arthur to examine and give his opinion upon a permanent gallows he had erected in view from his own piazza, said, "I have examined your new scaffold, sir, and say it will last for many years; *nine will* hang upon it *comfortably*, and eleven in one of your cases of exigency,") and positively would be understood to say, that I never witnessed one in which human beings could *not drag on* life with more comfort, and less misery, than in the hold of the barque Capt. Ross, where I spent twenty-five days; and eternal disgrace ought to follow Mr. Frost, the owner, and the members of the board of magistrates, under whose supervision he fitted it up.

The provisions were on a par with other things; and consisted of oat meal gruel for breakfast and supper. Of course, those who had any provisions themselves, eat none of that "stuff;" and for dinner, a pail of "scouse," made of "salt junk," (beef,) and pieces of biscuit, boiled up together, without regard to cleanliness or relish—the meat was nearly putrid. These "messes" were to be eaten without knife, fork, spoon, or dish, unless the same were supplied by the prisoners themselves, which, fortunately, some of *our* number possessed; though knives had been taken away when we first boarded, but subsequently returned. A thick,

course, hard, black biscuit, (not known in American shipping,) was also supplied, each day. We of course applied for a change of food; but all the benefit arising from the application, was merely a permission to have our own tea made, and rice cooked, in lieu of the ship's provisions, providing we "would supply enough for the whole mess;" which, as a matter of necessity, we did; and the small sea stores we had providently laid in, came into requisition, notwithstanding Frost's assertion. Some of the articles we had were of little use, such as Indian meal and flour, as the doctor, (cook,) could seldom be induced to bake a cake or boil a pudding, unless on the broad principle of a "full supply for all, agreeable to the Captain's orders."

Almost enough has already been told, to excite, in the breast of every man, a feeling of contempt and hatred towards all who had any thing to do with the management of that ship; and I can never feel otherwise than a profound abhorrence for them. Yet, I would say, in honor to Morton's humanity, that he did, after half the passage was done, permit the provisions, when supplied by the state prisoners, to be cooked distinct from the mess of the felons.

Poor L. W. Millar, chained to D. Deal, lay in a corner berth, on the opposite side of the ship, and almost shut from any of his countrymen; without murmur or complaint, passed several days without a particle of food passing his lips, having been too poor to purchase any, and too magnanimous to discover his necessity—it was discovered, however, and relieved.

But, poor man, he was reduced to a mere skeleton, and we all felt a deep sympathy for him, though we were but a little better off.

It will not be supposed that I can give any description of our passage out the St. Lawrence. Indeed, I cannot; for we scarce saw day light, until after we had passed the grand bank; and all I can say, is, that the weather was high and the sea boisterous—that the decks, cordage, spars, and every thing about the ship, were covered with an immense quantity of ice; and that the Captain feared much its consequence—that something was continually “giving away;” and that most of the hands had some parts of their persons severely frozen—some of them in such a manner that they were rendered cripples for life. So great was the injury received by the extreme frost, that scarce men enough were left to work the ship. When we heard this information, *we* would have been eminently happy in offering our services to work the ship, and navigate her too.

This leads me into a relation of a scene that took place but two days after the foregoing information was received. Quite early, on the morning following the passing of the banks of New Foundland, an unusual bustle was observable on the deck; and Capt. Morton’s voice was heard in calling “all hands on deck, even the cripples.” Arms were supplied, and charged; and the men disposed so as to “be ready, in case of any rush from the hold; and when the order was given, to fire upon the prisoners.” Such was the primary arrangement; and the next was, to come to our

grate, and order all the men below into the berths, on pain of immediate death. The Captain then *commanded* Vernon and Mallery on deck, at the same time declaring that he was "armed to the teeth," and so were his men; and that they would "destroy every soul," if the slightest disposition to disobey, or move, was manifested among us. Then telling his men to cock their pieces, he hastily unlocked the grate, and drew out V. and M. with immense trepidation, and slammed back the door suddenly, as if a rush was expected from beneath. These movements astonished us, and we remained in suspense as to the meaning of the uproar, until they had brought the two men to the deck, when their vehemence got the better of their judgement; and in their haste to vent their wrath, the information was undesignedly conveyed to us. They accused the state prisoners of premeditating a mutiny, to take the ship, and sail into an American port. The two men actually had their chains nearly severed, while three other couple had theirs cut in two.

After considerable altercation, and a vain attempt to "seize Vernon to the mizzen rigging for a flogging," they were "turned below," without any elucidation, farther than the discovery of the tool, a notched knife, with which the chains had been cut. Parker and myself were next called up. For my part, observing their nervousness, I felt a little obstinate; and, consequently, passed up the companion ladder rather slowly, which they construed into an inclination to favor a rush after me, and drew me up with a roughness hardly consistent with kindness, and shut the door with

a celerity that clearly proved fear reigning predominant with them. It was truly ridiculous to observe the precautions taken against a surprise from a few unarmed and manacled prisoners. I laughed outright, to see the master of the ship standing on the poop, with a pistol in each hand, and a "volunteer's hoop hilted sword" by his side, tremblingly agitated. The guard, and all the men on board, were fully armed, and peculiarly dispersed; some behind the main, the fore, and the mizzen masts, while others were in the boat, or behind casks, and all with their arms in an attitude of defence.

The master of the barque, and master of the guard, both at the same time, upbraided us with having planned a conspiracy against them, which, they declared they were informed, was to have broken out that day, headed by Parker and myself, whom they *swore*, should be punished with unmitigated "severity." "Cruelty, you mean," said I—"yes, cruelty," M. replied. "But, then," I rejoined, "calmness is requisite, to enable you to make proper enquiry; and an investigation may prove your information erroneous." "No! No!" he replied, "our information is correct; and you were using the saw on your chains, when we received it; and the mark will suffice to prove what I say. Will you permit me to have your chain examined?" "Most assuredly you can do that; but you ought to be careful how you hold those weapons in your hand, for they may prove dangerous to your friends, as well as to us, through your extreme agitation." This so exasperated him, that he swore, and fumed, and stamped, like

a mad fellow. I felt in a provocative humor, and indulged it to his great annoyance, more particularly after the chain had undergone an examination, without the discovery they so confidently expected.

Dinner time being now arrived, we were sent down, and further investigation deferred for the present. On the next morning, however, the bustle recommenced, with an order for Beemer and VanCamp to go to the deck, who were soon sent back again, when Parker and myself were called to undergo another ordeal. As soon as we got above, Morton accosted us with bitter invectives, and said he had positive evidence of our guilt, and was sure of finding the mark; if he did, our punishment should be exemplary. His scrutiny, this time, was crowned with the desired success; for he *really detected* our guilt, by discovering the small incision made in Montreal, by Gemmel, who, with Vernon, wore the chain at that time, as before stated.

I cannot say that I ever saw more frenzied delight, exhibited by any beings, than these men manifested. It seemed as though the very sluice gates of demoniac pleasure were unlocked; for now they had occasion, however trifling, for punishing the very men they so greatly feared, and whom they anxiously sought to terrify. He produced a large chain, weighing near half a hundred, and persisted in displacing the small one we wore, with it, notwithstanding the testimony of every Upper Canadian, and Mr. Gemmel, who nobly came to the grate, and declared he had made the incision in the manner before explained. I certainly did not bear this new indignity with very good temper, for

I became exasperated in my turn, and told Morton I deemed his conduct *wantonly cruel*, and *cowardly*: and, although he could emit upon us his whole malignant rancor, as we were manacled, and in his power, *yet he should not do it with impunity*. We should yet meet on equal terms; and if it was twenty years hence, I would hold him to account for it, and require ample satisfaction.

I pitied his weak and dastard fears: and considered oppression of helpless beings, the sure indication of a mean and cowardly heart. He vindicated his conduct "on the score of the intended mutiny." But I told him, in strong terms, that he could not have attached any real blame to us, if we had risen, and even committed murder, in revenge for having been thrust into such an infamous hole, and starved and treated as we were. It appears this language was construed into a challenge, and carefully entered as such in his log, which was published by the owner as soon as the ship arrived in Liverpool, where credit was rendered "Capt. Morton, for his intrepid conduct, in discovering and suppressing a most dangerous mutiny, and the fearless manner in which he had visited the ring leaders with deserved punishment, while he *magnanimously pardoned* the others:" with a column of other bombast, where I came in for a full share of abuse.

It is exceedingly strange, indeed, that we did not suspect Beemer as the informer; for circumstances were strong against him. We supposed it had originated in a petty quarrel with some of the felons, which were

not unfrequent. But it was afterwards proved to have been him, as I will have occasion to relate.

Oh! for a curse to kill the slave,
Whose treason, like a deadly blight,
Comes o'er the councils of the brave,
And blasts them in the hour of might.

The large, heavy chain, it may well be imagined, added much to our misery. Mr. Parker generally stood by the side of the berth, so as to be under the light for reading, while I lay down at the same time, for the same purpose; the chain, therefore, hung over the side of the berth, with its whole weight on my ankle; and I can assure you, it caused no small pain and anguish, which I endured for ten or twelve days; when, being in sight of land, the Captain begged we would permit him to *divest* us of the large, and *invest* us with the small chain. I, at first, opposed the change, determined on calling the attention of the authorities to this outrage, immediately after landing; but Parker, desirous of escaping the obloquy such a difference in guards would undoubtedly attract, readily assented, well knowing that Morton could easily find means to evade any odium that might be attached to him on investigation. I finally consented too, and found some relief, as my leg had swollen very much. For the last ten days of our passage, we were permitted to spend an hour, each day, on deck; and although the air was chill and raw, it was a happy and comfortable hour. This one hour of fresh air, and free and wholesome breathing, did more towards reinvigorating our frames.

than any thing else that could have been offered; and, indeed, I was grateful to God, but not to the Captain, for the enjoyment of it.

A Reverend gentleman, by the name of Osgood, had taken a cabin passage on board the same barque, for Liverpool, and frequently visited us in christian kindness—to pray, sing, and converse with us, which relieved the tedium of many an hour. He was a New Englander, and had seven times crossed the Atlantic, on holy missions to the poor and degraded of London; where he had spent, at one time, eighteen months of arduous toil in the service of his Master, subsisting upon sixpence sterling per day.

For the last ten days of the passage, Capt. Morton seems to have relented of his severity toward us; and, as if to conciliate Parker and myself, he especially allowed us to remain longer than the others, sometimes overcoming his fears sufficiently to detain us on the deck four hours, while others were coming up and going below in rotation; all the time, however, the guards were under arms, and kept strict watch. Morton appeared, naturally, a quiet, inoffensive sort of a man; but having arisen from before the mast, he was highly puffed up with the importance of his station. This opinion of himself, common with men of his country and class, connected with egregious cowardice, rendered him an intolerable despot. During our passage out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and until we had passed the Grand Banks of New Foundland, the weather continued unchangeably cold and boisterous; but then became mild and moderate—in salubrity much

like our April and May—yet, when we approached the Irish coast, it assumed a colder aspect, and the dampness rendered it far less endurable to us than the American severe, though clear and dry atmosphere.

Our entrance of the Mersey was cheerless; more particularly on account of the mist and fog so prevalent all over England, at that season of the year.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER IX.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.
December, 1840.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: After the expiration of twenty-five days, our passage across the Atlantic was completed, and our anchor cast in the river Mersey, three miles from Liverpool, on the 16th December, 1838—just thirty-eight days after leaving Fort Henry.

We were soon transferred to a small steam lighter, and conveyed to the city. We lay some time at the stupendous docks, where we had an opportunity of beholding, with wonder and admiration, the extent of those magnificent and greatly useful works of art, that have cost millions of treasure, and years of labor to complete. The tide was out, and we were many feet below the top of the quay, where was collected a vast multitude, betraying the utmost curiosity.

More favorable circumstances could not have well been afforded to test and learn the general feeling for

us; for a detestation, if felt, must break out in insult and violent expressions; but, to their honor be it said, that not the slightest disposition of the kind was exhibited, except by a sooty little chimney sweep, with the equipments of his order in his hand. But, on the contrary, all was calm sympathy, with a few low murmurs of pity and commiseration running through the crowd, that was grateful to the ears of the wretched exile; and, when we were all standing upon "terra firma," the throng having opened a lane for us, there went forth one continuous peal, with "God bless the brave Canadians, and speedily release and return them to their wives and to their homes."

Before we landed, however, the Liverpool owner, with a number of magistrates, boarded us, followed by the Governor of the borough jail, and a man carrying a load of burnished hand cuffs, with which we were connected in parties of four—"felon style." In the street near the dock, a number of carriages were drawn up; into which we were put, and whirled away to the old borough jail—an immense building, erected exclusively for the detention of French prisoners taken on the continent, during the struggle with Bonaparte—but which was now devoted to the punishment of convicted criminals. It is said to be capable of accommodating upwards of a thousand persons. At the time of our entrance, there were, as I was informed by an officer belonging to the establishment, about five hundred men and boys, and two hundred women. The boys were upwards of two hundred in number, and under the age of ten—all convicted of larceny, or felony of some de-

gree—and under sentence of from six months to two years close imprisonment, on the silent system.'

In entering this *palace*, our carriage was driven by a postillion, with a guard on the boot. The heavy gates closed violently after us, as if to preclude the idea of ever repassing its dark and gloomy portals.

As we rattled up the paved court yard, beneath the frowning towers and grated windows, a melancholy satisfaction pervaded my whole soul; for it was indeed a pleasure to be, even thus, delivered from the loathsome habitation we had just left, though we entered a boding prison.

At the main entrance, we were obsequiously received by the officials; and I wondered if it was not deemed a privilege to become a tenant, where so kind and favorable a welcome was administered. It reminded me of the picture I had somewhere seen, of the quaint affability of a landlord, standing upon his threshold, dispensing welcome to his guests, well knowing that every new visiter added to his gains. I am sure he might well be lavish in retailing his good wishes, when each was worth at least a half crown to him. The doors were immediately thrown wide, and we were *politely* handed from the carriage, into a long, narrow hall, lined, on either side, with a row of sleeping cells, whose heavy, iron bound doors, with grated diamonds, were not calculated to impress us with an idea of a repletion of comforts within. About half way up the hall, we turned a sharp angle, and soon emerged into a tolerably spacious yard, flagged with large flat stones, (as was the case with all the ground rooms, halls and

yards of the building,) and flanked on the outside, and separated from another yard, by heavy walls, fifteen or twenty feet high, with a coping stuck full of broken glass bottles, formidable enough, in appearance, to deter the stoutest heart from any attempt to pass over it. In this yard we remained until dispossessed of all our iron *embarrassments*; and I can assure you, that, at that moment, I felt not only light footed, but light hearted also. We were next ranked in single file, and addressed by the Governor, (Mr. Batchelder,) who stated, that Mr. Jeffries, of the Quebec jail, had forwarded documents to him, expressive of an exceeding good character, which he was glad to see, and hoped we would maintain it; "for," said he, "character, in this country, with a prisoner, is every thing, and it may be in my power to do you a good turn in that way." The "board of visiting magistrates," who were present, with the lord mayor, and ex-mayor, expressed a deep regard for us, and a willingness to do any thing in their power, to meliorate our situations, and add to our comfort. They told us the establishment was conducted upon the "silent system;" but that they would consider us exempted from an obedience to that rule. No tobacco, newspapers, or books of light literature, however, would be permitted; and no articles, of any kind, taken out from, or brought in to us—no letters, or written communications, should pass, unless first inspected by the Governor, who would always be ready to extend any favor compatible with rectitude—and if we felt ourselves aggrieved, in any respect, we only had to make it known to the board of visiting ma-

gistrates, some of whom would see us each day. All these things arranged, we were dismissed, and permitted to retire from the yard to the "day room," where we found an exhilarating fire, around which we hastily crowded, with grateful sensations for once again being disencumbered from our galling load, and permitted to thaw our chilled bodies. The felons from Quebec remained outside still longer, and listened to a catalogue of crimes and "bad marks," that ought to have separated them for ever from all human society; nevertheless, the lenient Governor would permit them to remain with us, on account of the whole number being "*in transitu*;" but he hoped they would not, in the least, interfere with us. When we had become comfortably placed, and felt the influence of the fire, (something we had been debarred from for twenty-five cold days past,) supper appeared, in the shape of a half pound of black barley and pea bread, and a three half pint cup filled with potatoes, and a small slice of meat on the top. This provision, though coarse, was partaken with avidity, when, "out of respect for our being men not stamped with heinous offences," a pot of ale to each was served out; and much surprise was exhibited by several gentlemen who stood by, to observe some of our number refuse to partake it, from temperance principles, which their persuasions could not overcome. This supper was served us out of pure humanity; for it was a practice there, or, rather, a standing rule throughout England's jails, to never supply food to the prisoners on the first day of their arrival, supposing them to have been rationed for the day at their

last stopping place. This is a cruel rule, for prisoners in *transitu*, seldom receive their customary allowance; and never what nature would seem to require. To any appeals, the governors are always inflexible; and the poor, hungry wretch is never relieved, except some humane fellow prisoner, where he lodges, but little better supplied than himself, chance to share his scanty pittance with him, which, in the whole, would not satiate a common appetite.

In the persuasions used to induce an acceptance of the ale, we were told, that it was a peculiar favor granted by the Governor; and, if slighted, he might be offended. But all was to no purpose; for, had not pledged abstinence withheld us, I think a taste would have been sufficient; for I cannot conceive what there can be in this national beverage, to cause the English people to idolize it to such a degree—to an American palate it is perfectly nauseous.

Next came our sleeping apartments, to which we were shown about eight o'clock; upon these, my mind had been running for some hours past, for our last quarters had been so destitute of comfort, that we felt as though we ought to find something of a better kind here. We however soon discovered that they had been furnished with but little regard to comfort, yet with much regard to cleanliness, a very redeeming feature. The calculation was, for three to occupy a cell. Messrs. Wixon, Parker, and myself took one, and found three narrow cribs, very like coffins, with a mattress, two blankets, and a pillow, handsomely rolled up in each. And, although I had the precaution to

take in my overcoat and cloak, yet I felt the necessity of more bedding. I really thought Mr. Wixon would never recover that night's severity; and I do not know that he ever has. He was seized with a violent dysentery, and could obtain no alleviation for the night. The morning came, and with it new scenes; for we were directed to roll our beds as we found them, clean our cribs, sweep the room, rub, with a white stone, the door sill, and carry out the nuisance tins—wash them in a large stone trough, standing beside a well in the yard; then pile them regularly in one corner of the yard. Next, we were to undergo ablution ourselves, in the same stone trough; and then rank, in single file, opposite a window opening into the main court, when breakfast made its appearance, consisting of the pots, (in which our suppers had been served,) filled with the detested oat meal gruel, and a half pound of the "brown tommy." My gruel, as well as many others, remained uneaten. After breakfast, recourse was again had to the trough, to cleanse our *dishes*.

About an hour after we had breakfasted, two of the felons from another wing of the establishment, (both doing the term of their sentence there, the one a year for smuggling, the other eighteen months for vagrancy, alias, poaching,) came to our apartment, to teach us the art of cleaning, scouring, and scrubbing it. The benches and tables that circled the whole ward, first underwent a scouring with sand and water, rubbed with half a cocoa nut; then cleaned with soap and water. The next was, to sweep and scrub the flagged floor; then to rub the whole with a white stone; and,

lastly, the whole yard, an area of about one hundred feet by forty, was swept and mopped, and likewise the immense hall, which ended the labors for the day; and the orders were, that we should observe how it was done, so as to be able to do the same on the following morning. Out of the twenty-three state prisoners, only four, (native Scotchmen,) could partake of the oat meal; and, consequently, several cups remained full, sitting on the table; when the felons came in, they looked so wishfully at them, that we could not misunderstand—we therefore told them to eat what they wanted. The poor, half starved wretches, actually emptied five cups each, and declared they had never enjoyed so ample a meal before.

The visiting magistrates soon made their appearance, and we at once applied for a change of the gruel, for something else more palatable. They complied, and granted milk in lieu thereof; but the bread they could not alter. With the magistrates came Mr. Thornby, M. P., the mayor, ex-mayor, and Lord Bishop, John Buck, D. C. L., Chaplain, and Dr. Archer, surgeon to the borough jail. They all spoke kindly, and encouragingly, and hoped we would not long remain in prison, but soon be permitted to return to our homes. They proffered every friendship, and said, "if you have good friends in America, you have equally good friends here, and those who will serve you more effectually." They further advised us to write any friends we might have in England, and bring ourselves, by that means, into notice. So many applications had already been made to see us, out of sheer curiosity,

that it had become necessary to utterly close the door against all visitors.

Some of them, in the plenitude of their kind solicitude, advised us to abstain from communicating with Messrs. Humy, Roebuck, and others of that class, whose services would be rather detrimental than beneficial to our interests. They departed, and we felt pretty well satisfied with the reception our first request had met. But Dr. Duck remained behind, for farther conversation; and pleased us much with the kind solicitude he manifested, and the apparent pleasure with which he deeply engaged in every thing appertaining to our temporal, as well as spiritual welfare. This gentleman continued to visit us each day, and was exceedingly alive to every christian principle. His unbounded benevolence and generous attention, excited in each breast a sense of grateful pleasure, that never can be forgotten. In many subsequent scenes, when my whole soul has been wrung by oppression, and my mind driven to feelings of retribution against the human race, his character has stood out in *relief*, as a bright spot upon which I could gaze with satisfaction, and say there was *one good man!* Not a single trait of character was exhibited but what seemed governed and dictated by pure principles of christianity and universal love. I cannot relate a more expressive tribute to his philanthropy, than the following little incident that took place at his house, on the evening of our landing. It was usual for a select few of his friends to collect at his house occasionally, for the purpose of social prayer and spiritual conversation. When

engaged in one of these little bands, the news of our landing was conveyed to them. They instantly, at his suggestion, resolved to adopt our condition and ultimate release, as the absorbing subject of that night's prayers; and it was late ere those petitions ceased: the result was a strong hope of the interference of Providence in our favor; and he sought daily to infuse that *hope* into our minds. He had been engaged in the service of his country in the east, where he had, by intrepid conduct, worked his way from the ranks, up to the station of Major of Artillery, when he renounced the service of his country, for that of his divine Master—the uniform of a warrior, for the surplice—the sword of destruction, for the gospel of peace; and in this character he was preeminently useful, and had already attained the degree of Doctor of Civil Law. We gladly listened to his discourses and prayers, which were always extempore. He was an agreeable visitant to all who were desirous of instruction. He discovered an uncommon depth of thought, and delivered his sentiments with a readiness and eloquence that was truly fascinating. His understanding appeared remarkably clear, which was coupled to a quick apprehension, a solid judgement, and an excellent memory; and was ardently devoted in promoting the worship of "Israel's Covenant God."

On Christmas he attended with his daughter, (a child of about eight years,) in his hand, who had been long anxious "to come and see the poor Canadians." When I beheld the dear sympathizing creature holding to her parent's hand, gazing upon us with a tearful

eye, (for she had been taught to pity us,) and enquiring of our own dear little ones, strong emotions of bitter regret were excited in my bosom. The picture brought vividly to my recollection, scenes of the past; contrasting what was, and what might have been my situation. I then felt, more than ever, the severity of the fiat that had rent asunder the sweet ties of domestic society, and the friendships that still bound my heart to the land of my birth.

Although scenes of this nature would cause my thoughts to revert, sadly, to my home; yet gloom could not endure—it would vanish at the idea of having one *friend*, who would not, while life lasted, cease her struggles to emancipate, or join me in my land of exile. And it was a melancholy pleasure, too, to know I had left behind a daughter to bless the name of her absent parent, and who would ever be taught to pray for his release and return.

Our first dinner consisted of a half pound of bread, and a pint of “scouse, made of cows heads,” boiled to a jelly, with lips and gullet yet covered with the provender the beast had last eaten—the second of a cup of beef broth, or “beef tea,” as it was called, with the usual bread, and half a pound of beef; and the third of the same as the first supper. These dinners came in perpetual rotation, while the breakfasts and suppers consisted, after the change, of one pint of milk each.

We were in the heart of a foreign prison, four thousand miles from home—shut from society, friends, and enjoyments—debarred the opportunity of action, and the commonest privileges of the free—without a hope

of clandestine escape—with but a faint earnest of sympathy, and refused wholesome and proper provision; yet I do believe every man felt contented, cheerful, nay, even happy; for the contrast between the situation we had just left on board the Capt. Ross, and the one we occupied in the borough jail, was so great that it caused sensations of pleasure, grateful to feelings so long outraged: and when night came, we retired to our scanty beds, with strong anticipations of refreshing slumbers, and ideas of tolerable comfort.

Notwithstanding the advice against writing Messrs. Huane, Roebuck, &c. I addressed them both, with Lord Brougham, for myself and the other Niagara District prisoners, as a distinct class. Messrs. Wixon and Parker did the same, representing their cases connectedly, with all from the London District and Toronto, who had taken the benefit of an “ex-post facto” law. Such proceedings were most justly represented as glaringly illegal, and most egregiously irregular; and Mr. Millar, on the part of the American citizens, wrote Mr. Stevenson, the U. S. Minister at the Court of St. James. In my letters I desired to hear “from some of those liberal spirits, who had so long stood up in the British Parliament, as the unbiassed champions of reform, and the undaunted opposers of an evil, iniquitous ministry. I appealed on the score of fellow feeling, and earnestly solicited their aid, in bringing our cases before the eye of the government; so that, in the event of our sentences being carried fully into effect, there might be no ground upon which the *British* ministry could get rid of the onus of an illegal

transportation; for, in Upper Canada, there never had existed any law, even recognising such an event, until but three months prior to our trial, when a bill was passed, only *anticipating* it; and that bill had not yet received the sanction of the Queen; and it was, therefore, unconstitutional to act upon it. But all the practices in the Province, were rife with unconstitutionality; yet, I fancied, there existed more responsibility in England, and, consequently, I imagined my appeal would not be vain." In fact, when I first put foot upon British soil, I felt almost assured that I should not leave it, unless I was really *homeward bound*. I named, too, the *ruse* of Sir George Arthur, in entering into a compact with the prisoner, by which he could set up, against merited censure, the plea of the prisoner making choice of transportation in the lieu of *death*—a plea I regarded as perfectly puerile, and could only have originated in a total absence of all law upon a subject of that nature; and one that could not give the slightest coloring of propriety to such a violation of what was right; and I doubted not, but that, if we could obtain a hearing, through such men as Brougham, Hume, and Roebuck, we would find liberality sufficient in the government, to release us from imprisonment, if not a full permission to return to our residence in Canada.

To talk of clemency, as connected with the Queen, I knew to be hyperbolic; for very rarely did any communications, designedly made for her, ever meet the eye of majesty, particularly when not agreeable to ministers through whose hands they must proceed

Ours, for instance, must be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, under whose arbitrary policy, explained to the Canada Governor, it was that we were suffering. Even should these documents approach the throne, and elicit feelings of sympathy, yet they could not be acted upon, at her instance, if counter to the views of the ministry. Nevertheless, that there might be no "stone left unturned," I wrote out, and addressed to Lord John Russell, a petition, signed jointly by all my class, praying "Her Majesty's interference against an illegal sentence;" and boldly describing the means resorted to by the Lieutenant Governor, to effect our transportation from the land of our homes. We ingeniously acknowledged having engaged in acts that might bear the construction of high treason; but in reality, it was not treason in us; we had merely opposed, by the only means remaining to us, the treasonable practices of Her Majesty's representative. We had lost many of the privileges and rights the constitution had provided for, and we only sought to retrieve them. "We had been driven to the measures we took," and I quoted Lord Durham to sustain it. "We protested against our inordinate bondage, and appealed to the justice and good will of her Majesty to her loyal subjects, for an effectual release, or, at least, an impartial investigation, &c. &c.; and lastly, we knew that when her Majesty became acquainted with our unhappy situation, and read our faithful representations, and listened to our appeals to her sense of equity, she would grant our petitions; and, as in duty bound, we would ever pray."

I next wrote Lord Durham, expressive of my personal gratitude for his forbearance, through the application of Mrs. Wait; and congratulated him on having "brought home so many testimonials of his good government, of which I was a living one." I recapitulated the substance of our paper to the Queen, and begged he would put in her hands all the documents he had received relative to my case, personally. I depended much upon the light he would throw upon Canadian affairs, and hoped he would make such representations, relative to our cases, as a politically oppressed people, that would result to our ultimate good; and "his liberal principles, connected with his unbounded influence, would, I was sure, be as effectual in procuring our liberation, as it had been in saving my life."

But all my expectations from him were vain! for all the answer I received, was a mere acknowledgment of my flattering note," and "an acquiescence in the request of placing at the disposal of the ministers, all the papers bearing upon the cases of sentenced political offenders;" * * and he, "at *present*, was not in a position to command any influence for, or call the attention of the Queen to them." Whatever Lord Durham's position was at that time, it is now an acknowledged fact, that his able report, that made its appearance in the House of Lords, but a short time subsequent to our leaving England, has done a deal of good to the oppressed people of the Canadas; and I sincerely hope he will receive his reward in the world to come; for I am sure he never will at the hands of his unwise

and impolitic sovereign. The following are extracts from a letter I received from Joseph Hume, Esq., which gave considerable cause for exultation and encouragement.

“Bryanston Square 24th Dec. 1838.

“Sir: I have, on my return from the country, this moment received your letter of the 22d instant.

“I cannot hold out to you, or your unfortunate companions in misfortune, any hopes that I can do you any good; but I write to acknowledge your letter, and to say, that your cases shall immediately be enquired into. * * *

“If you have a copy of your petition to the Queen, send me one, and such other information as may make me acquainted with your cases.

“In haste, I am your obd't serv't.

“JOSEPH HUME.

“Mr. Benjamin Wait, Liverpool Borough Jail.

“P. S. Let me know whether this reaches you !”

The above was soon followed by a note from Mr. W. Waller, who represented himself as having come from W. H. Ashurst, Esq., of London, Barrister and Solicitor to John Arthur Roebuck, Esq.—that his errand to Liverpool was, to see us, and obtain information for them; but not having brought an especial order to that effect, he could not obtain admission to our prison, until it came from the Secretary of State, for which he had since written. He also sent in a paper, purporting to be an agreement with W. H. Ashurst, to act as our solicitor, by which his services would be ensured, under the eye of Roebuck, Brougham, Hume, &c. The document was readily signed by all but Beemer, and returned. An order for his admission arrived; and, although seven in the eve-

ning, he came in, immediately, to inform us, that Mr. Roebuck would, himself, be down on the following day; and he suggested the propriety of appointing a person from each class, to confer with him, to avoid confusion. Messrs. Wixon and Parker, were to take precedence for their cases; and myself and Miller were to follow, for ours. It was arranged that Mr. Waller should introduce the four to Mr. Roebuck, while the others were to seek amusement in the yard. The next day, about four P. M., Mr. Roebuck made his appearance, accompanied by Mr. W. I was named to him; he acknowledged the receipt of my letter, and said, his design for coming, was to procure material sufficient to bring our cases into the Queen's Bench, which he had no doubt, would result favorably. His attention was then arrested by Mr. Parker's saying, that his class was not as deeply implicated as Mr. Wait's; and, perhaps, it might be better to bring their cases up first; as the one party had received a trial, and the other had not. Mr. Roebuck caught the idea at once, and desired to be left alone with him. They remained closeted for some time, when he took his leave without farther notice than merely saying, he had received all the information he desired, and would attend to the cause immediately—that he was cramped for time, and Mr. W. would inform me of the arrangements made: and requested that all the communications might be addressed to Mr. Ashurst.

I have been thus particular in relating these incidents, for my companions from Niagara, were inclined to charge the exclusive proceedings that followed.

to the designed misrepresentations of Parker, and a fear that his success might be jeopardised by a too numerous participation in the benefits of inquiry; but I saw, at once, the occasion for it.

The nine men, among whom he was numbered, had been treated more palpably illegal, than those of us who had received a trial. Their sentences were given under an "ex post facto" law, directly opposed to the spirit of the British code, that nominal "bulwark of British liberty," viz: the "jury act." Ours, too, was illegal and unjust, but truly not so undisguised; for, by the time we were captured, Sir George Arthur had become somewhat more way-wise, and began to think a little more plausibility was requisite in dealing with the Canadians, than with the Tasmanians, whom he had hung up with impunity.

I was informed by Mr. Waller, that it had been determined upon to apply for a habeas corpus, under which twelve persons were to be taken to London for investigation and special pleadings before the Queen's Bench, while the others must still remain in the custody of the government; and all I could advance against such a fatal arrangement availed nothing. However, whatever induced our common friends to raise this distinction, I am quite certain it resulted detrimentally to the excluded party; for it created, in the estimation of the government, unfavorable impressions regarding our cases—the ministry naturally viewing this partial proceeding, as a tacit acknowledgment of a total want of all ostensible pretext for demanding a similar investigation and favor for us; yet, to keep up appearances,

we were all desired to commit the particulars of each individual case to paper. For such purposes, paper, ink, and quills, were gratuitously supplied by some without, who kindly sympathised with us.

We all, by advice, unitedly demanded copies of the official documents, under which we had been brought to, and were still detained in Liverpool. A dozen copies were taken without delay, and given us. It was a most singular instrument indeed, a mere warrant, drawn up and signed by John Colborne, Governor *pro tem.* of Lower Canada, Commanding Capt. Digby Morton, Master of the barque "Capt. Ross," to receive on board, and carry into transportation, the persons therein named—first landing them where "we" (the Queen) might deem proper, in the United Kingdom, "to the intent that they may be delivered into the hands of some person duly authorised to receive them."

The loose, vague, and slovenly manner in which this document was drawn up, elicited many pertinent remarks and observations from our counsel, and some public journalists. Perhaps a more decrepit instrument had never emanated from the pen of any individual who held the least pretensions to legal knowledge. The "recitation, (the only place in which we see Arthur named,) is extremely deficient in point of information. The reader can, in no wise, discover how the prisoners came into Colborne's possession, or by what authority he detained them." It all appears a matter of mere speculation, when first taken up, and so it leaves it. In the recitation, Leonard Watson's name is given, but does not again appear, although all

the others (for one warrant *covered* the whole of us) are named six successive times. Had there been no other irregularity, the defective construction of this precept should have been sufficient reason for an immediate release. But, with the British government, "*might is right*;" and no justice is granted to the obnoxious, feeble bondsman notwithstanding the greatest inordinate practice.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER X.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

January, 1841.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: I closed my last with some remarks concerning the instrument that bore the title of a warrant, and had *the honor* of taking twenty-three political prisoners from Canada to Europe. It only required reading, to be ridiculed, even by the comparatively illiterate. In fact, not only ridiculed, but also condemned, as placing unbounded authority in a petty master of a lumber ship, to deal with us as his disposition might dictate; and heaven is a witness, that his conduct bore no shade of humanity.

He, accompanied by the Liverpool owner, called upon us, and apologised for the publications relative to the mutiny. To show their regard, Mr. Frost, would undertake to forward, free, any letters we might wish

to send to America; as a packet, with which he had some connection, was about to sail for Boston. We accepted his proffer, and put in his hand a large number, which he sent on board the Pennsylvania and St. Andrews, two packets that went down in the channel; and with them, all our letters.

Christmas, the great English feast day came, and brought to us the double rations usually issued in all their prisons; but we cared but little for their extras, for we had obtained the permission of making up a sort of mess, or pudding, from the relics of our sea stock. Flour, supplied by J. G. Parker, was mixed into dough, with *pure* water, then incorporated with a portion, still remaining, of the dried fruit sent me while yet at Kingston, by a kind sister. This simple lump boiled, constituted our *excellent* Christmas dinner; and we partook of it with as hearty a relish as we would have done, of the choicest at home.

I mention this trifling incident, because it gave rise to a conversation upon the subject of England's paupers, to which I listened with silent horror. While we were engaged with our "*plum pudding*," a gentleman who was always a privileged visiter, came in, and remarked, that he was happy to find us so well employed.

"But," said he, "you find your dinner, no doubt, a coarse one; and, perhaps, the poorest, in your country; would feel themselves poor, indeed, if they were not able to provide a better, any day in the year. But let me assure you, that there are millions, in this land, who never know what a full dinner is, even of the coarsest food—who seldom taste of meat—and, during the winter months, never partake of but one meal per day; and that, perhaps, but a half one. In the course of my duty, I have visited families who

had not tasted food for days: and knew not where to turn for any. A famine is now raging in Manchester, that must very soon result in riot, blood-shed, and murder, unless proper means are resorted to, to alleviate the prevalent misery and destitution. In fact, the paupers of our whole land, are in a state but little better than starvation. There are none, perhaps, who witness so much of human wretchedness, as the Clergyman, if he holds himself bound to attend the couch of sickness, and administer the consolations of religion to the dying, in their last moments. And, alas! what a harassing task it is, to fulfil the duties of such a station! How often must his heart be torn by the scenes of anguish he beholds in the beds of the starving poor! He finds it impossible to lead the mind of the expiring, to the consideration of a future state, when his children, (mere shadows of humanity,) are mourning about him for bread. How often must he rob his own dear ones of half their wants, to administer a slight comfort to the victim of aristocratic avarice; and even then, incur the charge of dealing out with a *cold handed charity*. The oppression of the many, for the aggrandizement of the few, is what has branded England with infamy. It is want! cold, meneral, maddening, want! that causes so many of England's *subjects* yearly to overleap the barrier to crime, and become thieves, incendiaries, robbers, and murderers. It is hunger! cruel, infuriating hunger! that fills our jails, penitentiaries, and hulks, to overflowing, and has peopled, with abandoned outcasts, the penal colonies to which you are sentenced. I have more pity for that man, who suffers the extreme penalty of the law for highway robbery, if it was but to supply his needy offspring with food, than for him who rolls, in his splendid equipage, to a sudden end of horror.

“When I see the gaudy trappings of rank, and splendor of riches, contrasted with the poor, forlorn beggar, in his tattered garments, and bare feet, with his gray locks streaming in the winds of winter, and his fleshless, trembling limbs, scarce bearing him up against the blasts, I cannot close my eyes upon the fact, that these are sure indications of a state of society, that must be changed for anarchy and blood-shed. If France has suffered much on account of her high-handed oppression, will not England suffer a thousand times more? But her measure is not yet full.

“Liverpool is more free from the wretched victims of inanition, than, perhaps, any other considerable city of the United Kingdom, yet our jails, (two extensive edifices,) do not afford room for near the whole number of petty criminals. This building, alone, contains upwards of three hundred able males, and two hundred females; one half of whom had no other incentive for the commission of crime, than ostensibly to supply themselves and families with food. Two hundred boys occupy a portion, also; many of whom are under the age of eight, committed invariably for theft; and in five out of six cases, they have been inducted into the practices, by their own parents, frequently with a view to their entrance here. These little villains would surprise you, by their agility in getting possession of property, and their ingenuity in secreting it; their acuteness is indeed worthy a better cause.

“Such tales are scarcely to be credited, but they are true; and misery and crime will still, as they have been for past years, be on the increase, until our impolitic government devises some means to provide comfort and less dependance for her six millions of paupers. Man must be supplied with food, necessary clothing, and a proper share of intelligence, before crime will decrease.

“Our nation is daily adding to her stores of knowledge, science, art, and individual wealth; but the upper grade, alone, profit by them. Though the means of knowledge are as abundant as the bread stuffs the soil produces, yet they are to the poor, still more difficult to command. Has not England, in her small circle, more truly wretched than all the remainder of Europe? Has she not more infamy and crime gazetted in one year, than America in ten? Then why say that she is the most honored and wealthy nation in the world? In this *right merrie Ould Englands*—the land of matchless beauty—of uncommon production—renowned for hilarity, pleasure, generosity, charity, and philanthropy—the richest, most powerful, intelligent, and FREE in the universe—there are thousands dying yearly, from inanition—thousands rendered cripples, and truly hideous in appearance, by being, while too young, driven, in a starving condition, to labor incessantly, for twelve or fourteen hours per day, at the mills or factories, in a painful attitude, to which they inevitably fall victims at a premature age—millions, who know not what it is to use a single article of com-

fort—thousands, whose countenances, from continued destitution, settle down into a melancholy dejectedness; and whose spirits know no hilarity or pleasure—whose wants have never been relieved by the high sounding charitable, generous, sympathetic, or philanthropic gentry of the age! Millions, who are in the midst of riches, but dare not partake, and die, famished, in the sight of tuns of bread stuffs. It is true, England is powerful, because despotic! But, *freedom* is desecrated by being coupled with her present institutions, which all tend to oppress the many, and pamper the few.

“I would not wish to be understood as saying that there are none whose necessities are relieved by private charity, or charitable institutions; but there are millions who do yearly receive the miserable pittance of eight or twelve pence per week, during the winter. But what is such a sum, in comparison to the wants of a human being, in a country where bread is so dear? I will not say that the ‘abominable corn laws’ produce all the misery prevailing here, but I cannot but admit, that they conduce largely toward it. Perhaps you do not know their operation; I will, therefore, briefly explain it: wheat now, including the duty, ranges near \$2 22 per bushel; and such is rendered continual by the sliding scale of rates, which rises, as wheat falls in value, and falls as wheat rises. Now, the great evil is, that this duty does not find its way into the treasury, but into the pockets of the great landlord.

“I say, the millions are starved, to gratify the few. Sir Robert Peel says, ‘it is the constitutional policy of England, to maintain the aristocracy and magistracy, as essential parts of the community;’ and that ‘the present evils are beyond Parliamentary enactment.’ Official and newspaper reports of the day, say that, at least one half the deaths taking place among the lower class, are caused by a want of proper nutriment!! Can we wonder, then, that mobs, riots, and chartist meetings are so common? Nay, I am only astonished that bloodshed and murder is not more frequent! That every pauper is not a thief, robber, or incendiary; for at least one half the applicants, at the numerous workhouses, and charity and philanthropic institutions, are turned away unrelieved.



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“Oh, how saddening to the better feelings of man—how shocking to the delicacy of nature, is the knowledge, that to the arbitrary policy of the slave, is attributable nearly all the immolations of my country women upon the shrine of prostitution, and consequent drunkenness, disease, and death. What will not starvation do! We have seen it sacrifice virtue and honor, to infamy, degradation, and vice—make the staid and sober citizen a robber, an incendiary! The moral man a monster in crime, a murderer! The bold, hardy peasant, a sneaking, villainous fiend! The loving husband, and fond father, a demon, a homicide! The patient, devoted mother, an unnatural being, a horrid infanticide! and a virtuous, intelligent, and benevolent community, is changed into a suspicious, illiberal, atheistical, degraded, and criminal band!”

After listening to the foregoing tales, or rather conversation, upon “woful subjects,” I laid down to rest upon my hard couch, inclined to murmur *less*, at what I too well deemed harsh treatment and ill fare; I was distracted with the idea that thousands of fellow-beings might be then vainly seeking a fevered rest on the bare ground, or expiring through want, within the same city. I could imagine I saw the distortion of their countenances, and heard their dying groans, though they were *free*, and ostensibly protected by that *powerful* government which held me in thralldom. I remembered, too, the dreary manner in which I had spent the night previous to the last anniversary, in making my escape from Canada, across the broad and sweeping current of the Niagara, on a log canoe, that would scarcely float, when I nearly fell a victim to frost and extreme cold. I slept soundly, and dreamed of all I had heard, and a thousand additional horrors, and awoke to a knowledge of my own unhappy condition, with a keen sense of the loneliness and unprotected

situation of my wife and child. And if I ever prayed with fervor, in my life, it was then, for their well-being, and exemption from want and misery. I more than ever deprecated the idea of Mrs. Wait's coming to England, and wrote positively prohibiting it; but that letter, too, was lost, with the *Pennsylvania*.

The time was now coming in which we were to embark for Portsmouth. I therefore made another effort to prevent, or, rather, show the fallacy of creating the distinction, and excluding a part of the prisoners from investigation. I explained to Mr. Waller, that I had great misgivings upon being sent to the hulks: assuring him, that I felt certain, that when placed on them, there would be no probability of leaving, until sent on the transport ship—that I had heard so much about the horrors of those “floating prisons,” that I dreaded a residence there, more than immediate transportation. He was very anxious to convince me that it was “only nervousness,” and we had no reason to be under apprehensions concerning the treatment we should receive; as he would take care that a proper agent should be appointed, in Portsmouth, to attend to our wants. In fact, one had already been employed; and he gave me the address of J. W. Greetham, Esq., barrister, &c.; then added, “if you find your abode less agreeable than you can reasonably expect, you have only to make it known to W. H. Ashurst, Esq., barrister, 137, Cheap side, London, and he will remove you by ‘habeas corpus,’ if there is the least probability of any benefit resulting.” I said, I had no doubt but that the government, since our friends had admitted a

distinction, would avail themselves of it as a pretext for sending us away; for the fact of being sent to a hulk without protest, would, on our part, be an acknowledgment of its legality; and that we considered ourselves still "in transitu," merely awaiting an opportunity of being conveyed on the voyage. Indeed, those prison ships were only regarded as receptacles for men whose cases were positively decided; therefore, being sent there, was significant enough of what the government designed doing with us; consequently, I felt it a duty to draw up a protest against a removal, intimating, that if we yielded at all, it would be on the ground of *expediency*. This paper was presented at the Queen's bench, when the Attorney general pledged his honor, "that, although the government views them as being in *transitu*, none should be sent away until each has his case thoroughly investigated." Mr. W. promised to do what he could, to effect a removal to London, of the whole number; but he feared it would be impracticable; "as the moment a man is placed under a habeas corpus, the expense of his support falls upon those who obtain it." Indeed! the secret was out, and I said no more. I had repeatedly been informed, the feeling was so strong in our favor, that should our liberation be offered on indemnity or bail, either would immediately be forthcoming. Then, it was not philanthropy, but political partisanship, that had dictated an interference at all! I therefore made no farther struggle to prevent the removal; and twice, subsequently, refused to permit my name to be added to those going to London, and thus be separated from my fellows,

whose cases were so closely joined to mine by similitude.

The vessel, destined to convey us to Portsmouth, arrived; but a clashing between the orders brought by her, and some that had come by land, caused a short delay. In the mean time, many gentlemen of the city exhibited a great anxiety to administer to our comfort, or show their esteem, by some slight token; but all the Ministry would permit us to receive, was a supply of shoes, to all who needed them; but few, however, were required; consequently, the Niagara prisoners went away without having been much expense to these philanthropists. The debt of gratitude due to Dr. Buck, was augmented by the present of a volume of evangelical hymns, got up by himself, in a splendid style, most of them original. Mine was bound in a superb manner, and I still retain it as a valuable memento of his christian regard.

On the first of January, we were favored with sociable visits from various gentlemen; and many ladies made application, in vain, to be admitted. However, they were not to be utterly thwarted, and sent for me to the grated door, having read or heard of Mrs. Wait's successful application at Quebec. I found a considerable number collected, and had the honor of a short conversation with one who had been a "Lady Mayoress." They were all very richly attired, and betrayed the utmost curiosity and sympathy, as well as an immense degree of ignorance upon Canadian matters and inhabitants. The conversation turned, of course, upon my wife's conduct; and I felt high plea-

sure in listening to their comments. Indeed, they were extravagant; and *promised* "as great success to her endeavors, as the most ardent mind could anticipate, if she really did come to England;" and should she land at Liverpool, she should have their protection and assistance, in every possible shape; and I might be assured that would not be slight. They received my gratitude, with a few paper mementoes, and retired from the door, leaving me to return to the enjoyment of my prison associates.

But here I will close, and bid you adieu.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XI.

ASHGROVE, near Outlands, V. D. L.

February, 1841.

To — — —,

My Dear Sir: I believe my last letter ended with a scene at the door of the Liverpool borough jail, between some *curious* ladies, and your equally curious humble servant. The assurances they gave me, of extending the kind hand of protection and assistance to my bereaved wife, in case of her landing there, did my heart good; and made me regret having thus hastily written to her so disparagingly of the attempt; for these sympathetic feelings satisfied me, that the object of her mission, and the generosity and benevolence of her motives, would ensure her an enthusiastic reception.

I do not know as I have ever received any expressions, that have sent to my hart a greater thrill of pure delight, or sensations of more grateful pleasure, than that very trifling scene. It was, in my mind, the very harbinger of her success; and it did more than all else, to determine me to bear up under every succession of misfortune that might approach me.

The following is a copy of what was entered into the diary of J. G. Parker, for January the 4th, 1839, copied and inserted since my return.

"At daylight the rattling of chains announced to us, that the eleven prisoners were being prepared to embark for Portsmouth. Their chains were riveted on them, as well as on the eleven convicts from Quebec. After dinner they went on board—Dr. Buck having previously prayed with us—and the separation was affecting, as their leaving was under apprehension that they should not see us again. Dr. Buck saw them on board the Meteor, (which is but a small vessel,) and the Governor spoke to the Captain of the steamer of the good conduct of the prisoners while in his custody. After the twenty-two persons were gone, we felt quite lonesome."

Indeed, the "separation was affecting;" for when we had been reinvested with our old acquaintances, and ranked up for a start, those who were to remain behind,* lined the hall near the door of our egress, with Dr. Buck at their head, they wrung our hands with tearful eyes, and many a "God bless you," while they assured us they would correspond with, and inform us of what passed with them, *if permitted*. The generous Dr. in his usual bland, affectionate manner, strove to direct our minds to strong hopes in, and firm re-

*Messrs. Wixon, Watson, Parker, Bedford, Malcolm, Brown, Alves, Walker, Anderson, Miller, Grant, and Reynolds.

liance on Israel's covenant God, who would relieve the weary soul, and release the confiding prisoner." He shook our only unshackled hand (for handcuffs, as before, had been replaced with the chains,) and put in mine, a pocket comb, which I still retain, as a sacred memento of the "one good man." He also gave me a letter* of commendation, that has frequently, since, been the cause of considerable respect and ameliorating circumstances.

Carraiges awaited us at the door, into which we got, and were treated with a drive through the fine city, in view of splendid edifices, down to the dock where the "Meteor," a small steam frigate lay ready to receive us.

It was about half-past three P. M. when we embarked, and were conducted to the bow cabin, just vacated by the marines, where we found all our baggage, with a bed each, wooden trencher bowl and spoons. Dr.

*
*Liverpool Borough jail, }
December 28, 1838. }*

Dear Sir: I can have no difficulty in expressing my approbation of the conduct evinced by you, and the other prisoners, while you have been unhappily confined within these walls.

I trust you will have that support which true religion can alone afford you: and that, wherever your lot may be cast, you will ever realize Israel's Covenant God.

I most affectionately commend you to the grace of God, and to the Christian sympathy of my brethren in the ministry whom you may meet. My prayers and my best wishes for yourselves, your wives, and your children.

Believe me yours, very respectfully,

JOHN BUCK, D. C. L.

Chaplain.

Mr. Benjamin Wait.

†Messrs. McLeod, Wait, Waggoner, Chandler, Gemmel, McNulty, Vernon, Mallery, Cooley, VanCamp, and Beemer.

Buck, and Mr. Bachelder, (the governor) with the commander came in immediately when we were counted, and a list of our names given. The Governor reported an extraordinary good character for the state prisoners, and recommended them to the especial favor of the officers—then bid us a pleasurable passage, and speedy release from imprisonment, and retired. The Dr. again imparted excellent advice, and bid us adieu, with a parting prayer.

About 6 P. M. the steam was got up, the moorings loosed, and the flight put under way for the sea, against a head wind, by which we were twice forced back before we made good our sailing. The morning of the fifth, found us almost a wreck, laboring heavily in an increasing gale, off Cork harbor, which we attempted, but found impracticable, after the whole day spent fruitlessly. The commander then deemed it necessary to bear away for Holyhead, where we rode off and on for the night, not daring to enter without a pilot; and signals for one in the morning, were only answered by counter signals to keep off. Our case was now desperate, and every moment becoming worse; the engine was disabled and stopped; the wheel houses, bulwarks, binacles and compasses were all swept away; the boats were destroyed, and no chance left for escape, but to run again for Liverpool, under almost bare poles; for but one sail was remaining, the others having been shredded to ribbons by the force of the wind.

It was, indeed, no easy matter to re-enter Liverpool, without a single channel mark, buoy, or light, to guide our course; all having been displaced, and the light

ship driven in; but there was no alternative; the commander took the wheel and drove for the mouth of the Mersey, guided by the wrecks that lined each bank of the channel, shown by the vivid lightning's gleam, that at intervals exhibited the fell destruction that surrounded us. The night was otherwise excessively dark and murky. At length, near midnight of the 7th, we re-entered the river, and cast anchor opposite the city, almost a complete wreck, after having encountered such imminent danger, and witnessed so many wrecks and deaths.

During the three days and two nights we were thus "riding the gale," our cabin was utterly darkened; the large sky light being canvassed over and battened down; which, however, did not exclude the water that at every succeeding wave poured down upon us in torrents, and not only drenched us, but set our beds afloat, the cabin deck being our only berths. Not a man among us was free from violent sea sickness. Our situation can be easier imagined than described; and it may readily be conceded that we needed, or, at least, received, no food during these days of misery. It is, indeed, hard to *conceive* the wretched appearance we made, when we first emerged from that sink, and the horrid stench that arose from the cabin, when the sky light was first unbattened. The marines who did it, swore they never had experienced any thing half so nauseous. Yet no blame could be attached to the commander or any of the officers; for it would scarcely be supposed that they could pay much regard to us, when the whole ship, lives, and every thing,

were in such imminent jeopardy. Much credit is even due them, for their intrepid management; and endless gratitude is due the Almighty, for again bringing us to port, through every vicissitude and suffering, while many ships were wrecking, and hundreds of fellow creatures were sinking to a watery grave in our sight.

On going on board, Melcod was my *yoke-fellow*; but we were soon separated, in consequence of my ill health; and the chains were taken off my leg entirely. My complaint was a chronic one, the virulence of which, at that time, was augmented by a pulmonary attack; and when we returned to port, the marine surgeon deemed it necessary to have assistant advice. Dr. Archer, therefore, came on board, accompanied by another medical gentleman, who proceeded to examine my chest, breast, and sides, with a stethoscope, and pronounced it necessary to remove me to the shore, where I might join my other companions, and go to London by land. This advice arose from a benevolent anxiety to befriend me, and I thanked them for it, but declined accepting, from a wish to remain with, and share the fortune of my present companions, knowing that my services, in writing, would soon be necessary.

Dr. Buck came off, also, and brought a slip from one of the presses, containing a detail of many of the wrecks, with the loss of life and destruction of property, on shore, as well as at sea.

The Pennsylvania and St. Andrew's Packets, bound for America, filled with emigrants and passengers, were stranded, and went to pieces—only one man be-

ing saved from the P., while of the passengers on the St. Andrews, more, providentially, were preserved. The Brothers, and Lockwood, two other Packets, just entering the channel, shared the same fate, with nearly all their crews and passengers; while a vast number of smaller crafts were totally swallowed up, with all hands, involving the destruction of an immense amount of property, and the loss of several hundreds of human lives. The east shore of the channel was literally strewn with dead bodies, goods and property, and pieces of wrecks. The detail was shocking, to a painful degree; and, although our own escape had been indeed a miraculous one, when I finished reading there was not a dry eye among us, nor a heart that did not bleed for the misfortunes of others. From one of the wrecks, some of the passengers were taken by a life boat, and many drowned in attempts to escape. One gentleman refused, when an opportunity offered, to leave the ship, because his wife could not be found—choosing rather to stay and die with her, than to live, uncertain of her fate. He found her, and they both spent a night of horrors, in momentary expectation of death; but were, providentially, both found alive on the following morning, the only surviving beings on board. There was true, genuine, close attachment, equal to other I wot of. A father and son were found on the beach, clasped in each other's arms—a husband, wife, and daughter, lashed together with handkerchiefs and shawls—a brother and sister in a last enduring embrace; and mothers and children were found as if they had clung to each other in vain for mutual

protection. The picture was replete with horror and heart-rending sensation; but, ah! how many thousand times more lamentable must the real spectacle have been! The devastation was not confined to the channel and sea; for much of the shipping in the harbor and docks suffered material damage, while many lives, and much property, were destroyed in the city of Liverpool, and the adjacent country, by the total demolition of thousands of chimneys, steeples, and even houses. Many stately churches, that had braved the storms of past ages, were torn up by the roots, and thrown to the earth, terrible tokens of the force of the tornado, that had never, on these coasts, its parallel. Ah! the mutability of all things earthly!

After some essential repairs, we again hoisted anchor, with a tolerable merry "yo-heave-o," and put out, with a gentle breeze, though high sea, about noon of the 11th of January.

The contrast between this egress from, and the last entrance to the harbor, was truly very great. Then, the whole firmament was darkened with the fearful gale, and nothing but scenes of devastation were visible; but now the sun shone brightly out, and our gallant little frigate rode calmly onward, as if there had been no gloomy convulsions, no frightful dangers, and no violent struggles of nature so recently. The channel buoys were all replaced, the light ship was again at its post, and every thing exhibited a careful restoration of safety and quiet, though there were still remaining a thousand melancholy traces of the recent hurricane—the shore lined with living beings searching for lost

property; and the hulls of several ships were still visible. I was permitted, by the very kind commander, lieutenant Pritchard, to remain on deck; and as we passed out, he pointed to the timbers of a vessel then occasionally seen, and said, "there is all that can be discovered of an American liner, [the Brothers or Pennsylvania, I now forget which; however both were wrecked near each other,] that I saw going to pieces, and from which I was supplicated, by more than a hundred voices, in the most heart rending tones, to render assistance, which I was compelled to pass by unregarded; for, had it been in my power to have saved them, I should not have dared to do it. By rendering them assistance, and endangering your lives, and risking your escape, would have been placing my commission, my freedom, and even my life, and thereby the support of my numerous family, in jeopardy."

He conversed freely upon the subject of Canadian troubles, of our position and probable fate, and of his own life, circumstances, and family. Like many other English gentlemen I have since met, he commiserated our misfortunes, and hoped we might be permitted to return to our homes. "Your treason, no doubt," said he, "proceeded from mistaken virtue, and therefore it cannot be considered as disgracing or unfitting you for society or trust: though doubtless, in our opinion, as Englishmen, it is highly culpable and offensive. Yet I do not deny that our government is arbitrary, or, at least, partial; of which I am in myself a sad proof. These wounds," exhibiting a disabled hand, and a sabre cut across the face, "were received in her service,

on the deck of Nelson's flag ship, where I fought in the capacity of a junior Lieutenant, though quite young; I have ever since been in active employment; indeed, my family would have starved without it, and I am still *no higher than a senior Lieutenant*, although I have repeatedly obtained honorable commendations, (empty sounds,) for what was termed 'gallant and meritorious conduct.' " I dare not repeat any more of his conversation, for fear of evil consequences to him; for were soldiers, poor and in active service, to be guilty of meddling in politics counter to the ruling powers, or censure a superior's conduct, by the laws of his service, he is disgraced while the bread of his family is taken from them. This was not the only officer of the kind, whose attachment to the service of their country I have found held only by the brittle thread of interest, and who would change the moment they had an opportunity. I have frequently been struck with astonishment, at the idea of these poor men periling their lives in the support of a government that so deeply slights and tyrannises over them, giving them pay that is barely sufficient for sustenance, while it expects them to maintain a state, or rather an appearance of gentlemanly wealth and grandeur.

I was highly gratified with the humanity of the commander, and enjoyed the fine prospect afforded by a view of the bold and rocky shores of the "land's end" of England, close to which our boat "steamed rapidly" past. We sailed very near "Plymouth harbor," where Lieutenant Pritchard's family resided; that brought fresh recollections to his mind, and gave

rise to new conversations, that did honor to him as a father, husband, and friend.

Just before entering Portsmouth, by the unanimous request of my companions, I addressed to Mr. Pritchard a note expressive of our deep regard for his unvaried humanity, and the intrepid conduct he manifested during the late gale, which we begged he would receive as the only means in our power of expressing our gratitude. It was a duty we owed his merit, and would feel honored by his acceptance. He received it with evident satisfaction and pleasure, and said he would "long retain it, as a memento of more value than the applause of the rich or the powerful."

We also desired he would request the authorities, into whose hands he would place us, to permit us to occupy some room distinct from the general gangs. He promised to comply, and when we had landed he informed me that he had done so successfully.

About two P. M. of the 16th, we moored to the dock in Portsmouth, and proceeded directly to the Leviathan, a mammoth hulk lying close to an immense dock yard, where most of the numerous convicts of this station were employed. While there we were visited by several officers of the navy, whose curiosity suggested many questions connected with our cases and the Canadian grievances, which we cautiously answered, not willing to satisfy impertinence at the expense of discretion.

Sir Philip Durham, Admiral of the station, accompanied by Lieut. Pritchard, approached us, when I was named as "the man whose life had been saved by

the unparalleled conduct of his wife, who had made a journey of seven hundred miles, to present, personally, her petitions to his Lordship, the Earl of Durham."

Sir Phillip informed me at once, that the Earl was a brother of his, whose administration, he was highly gratified to learn, had given unusual satisfaction to the Canadian people. He spoke of his brother's elevated character as a statesman, counsellor, and liberal politician; and was sorry such baneful conduct had been exhibited by the ministry, as to cause his resignation of a government which had already exhibited some felicitous effects, and whose most prominent features had been generous humanity. He hoped the reconciliatory policy recommended by his Lordship would be critically tested, for not until then could his services be fully appreciated. Every sentiment expressed by Sir Phillip on this point, found a responsive feeling in my breast, and I too hoped his latter policy might obtain a full and proper trial; for I really anticipated much present benefit from it for the Canadas, the Upper at least.

He expressed himself heartily glad that we had manifested a desire to keep as far as possible from other prisoners, whom, generally speaking, we would always find a "set of infamous wretches, whose immorality, obscenity, and common vicious propensities, could not be held in too great abhorrence, and which must inevitably reflect disgrace upon every associate." He sincerely desired we would continue to maintain such a feeling, and show ourselves worthy the commiseration so universally exhibited. "In this hulk,"

said he, "where the worst of England's criminals are confined, you would not, if you receive their own tale, find one man guilty of the slightest punishable offence." He highly commended the strenuous efforts made in London, by the united abilities of so many great minds, but he feared it might all be attributable to party purposes.

My conceptions of the wretchedness existing on board those hulks, were in no manner diminished by the description given by the Admiral, or the haggard and ludicrous appearance of the few beings, who, in the discharge of their duty, had passed us; and I began to despond at the idea of becoming a settled resident and realizing the character invariably given to those great floating prisons. The boat that came to convey us away was reported, and we went on board, after bidding adieu to the soil of England, upon which we were never again to set foot.

We arrived at the York about four, rowed by a set of wretched looking convicts, and mounted its side with a deep gloom, a melancholy foreboding, a sad heaviness of heart, that I could not hope to have dispelled by the reception within its interior. We stood at last upon the quarter deck, whither our baggage soon followed. Its quantity evidently surprised the officers who stood there; and, no doubt, they already, in fancy, enjoyed the plunder of it, which they afterwards actually perpetrated.

The commander, Mr. Nicholson, in his *address*, told us it would be necessary to take what money, tobacco, &c, that we might have in our possession; and

it would be best to surrender it, for if any was found afterwards, the crime would be a heinous one, and punished in an exemplary manner; as no traffic, or use of tobacco was permitted. After all the money was given up, (which was precious little indeed,) our persons, pockets, and caps were closely "frisked," (searched,) for fear some had been secreted. We were then taken to another part of the ship where the irons were all knocked off. While that was proceeding, Mr. Greetham, a barrister of Portsmouth, with his lady, arrived, and enquired for me. I found he had been appointed by J. A. Roebuck, Esq., as our resident agent; and that he had come off to receive and impart whatever instructions were necessary to open a correspondence with London; and offer all assistance he could render, consistent with the regulations of the *hulk*. This appointment of a convenient agent, exhibited, on the part of our London friends, an anxiety to serve, or, at least, a generous desire to *calm* our minds; and, indeed, it almost dispelled the doubt that I had given way to, on our removal to that place from Liverpool.

This favor was indeed extraordinary, particularly as it was extremely seldom, if ever permitted, to any who once enter those walls, where they are shut from all friendly intercourse for the term of their durance, save one visit annually, from a wife, child, or parent.

Lieutenant Pritchard came off and reported our characters, perhaps more favorably than we deserved, as follows: "They are mostly men of property, respectability, and family. Mr. Batchelder could not have

given better characters than he did of these men; and all their conduct on board my vessel warrant the highest encomiums; and, I would add, they are intelligent, *praying* men." This great strain about character, which I found to be very common indeed among men who could not be supposed to possess any but the most heinous, I could not then see the full force of; and therefore laughed at the idea, as a mere burlesque upon the word. But since, I have frequently discovered, that every *thing* must have a character, and *that* is one great point of their system of prison discipline.

The next move was to the washing ward, where we were stripped, underwent an ablution, and a complete transformation, by the assumption of the "hulk dress," consisting of a coarse, spotted guernsey frock, hemp shirt, and a pair of short knee breeches, jacket, and waistcoat, of coarse thin gray cloth. A thin pair of gray long stockings, a coarse check cotton neckerchief, a pair of low cowskin shoes, and to *cap* all a coarse stiff wool hat; every article of which was marked, remarked and marked again, with the "crow's foot" (broad arrow.) When last, though not least, a large iron band of near four pounds weight, extremely rusty, was put on each right leg the following day. Thus carrying out to the fullest extent their *iron* policy. Besides the broad arrow, in a number of places the number of each, as entered on the books, was also stamped on each article of dress.

The clothes we wore were all bundled together and given to the steward, whose man, (a convict,) attended

to observe that no articles were retained, not so much even as a handkerchief.

Thus transformed, I am sure none of my former friends could have selected me from a number of beings so clad; in fact, I scarce knew myself, by feelings, appearance or any thing else. Yet this metamorphosis was not sufficient, for the following day our whiskers were shaved and hair sheared close to the head in such a manner, that you would have scarce known that we had ever possessed either. This was a *cruelty*, for the stiff hats did not shield our heads; and the consequences were immediate violent colds and catarrhs.

The apparel of these hulks I viewed as a peculiar badge of disgrace, and the iron band as the stern token of unmitigated slavery. And it was not with much calmness, that I regarded the progress made in the gradual scale the government pursued, in their determination to assimilate us, as much as possible to the condition, *character* and appearance of the "world's most degraded wretches," preparatory to their immersing us into this present undistinguishable state of debasement.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XII.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.
March, 1841.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: The York is the hull of an old 74, three deck man of war, built many years ago, upon which Admiral Lord Howe hoisted his flag; but proving too dull and sluggish to be brought into action, she was returned home, and condemned to an inactive life. She was immediately dismantled, and transformed to a prison ship; and was, for many years, only used however, as a hospital. But for the last few years the home convict establishment having been brought into a narrower compass, she has been occupied by about 400 convicts, besides the hospital, which contains now usually near 125 men. She has a spacious upper deck, upon which we *promenaded* in as desolate a state of mind as can well be imagined, until the approach of our bed hour, when each shouldered his hammock and followed a guard to the lower deck level with the water where we entered one, of fourteen wards, seven on either side of the narrow hall, each calculated to contain 40 men. The sides of the ship in each ward were pierced for two guns; but the apertures then were secured by iron bars, and, at night closed with dead lights. The front, adjacent the hall, was divided from it by iron grates, but from the collateral wards by wooden partitions. There were four of these, at that time unoccupied, separated by a wooden partition across the hall from those occupied; and the companion way to

the chapel on the middle deck, went up from the intermediate space nearly opposite our ward; the hatch of which was off, so that we were open to the atmosphere of the chapel, the hall, and the three other wards, whose ports were all up. It was January, and the weather was exceeding cold; yet, notwithstanding all these *frigid* facts, the ten Canadians, (for Gemmel had been sent to the hospital,) were put there to sleep, with a hammock slung that only contained a straw *pallasse*, two old blankets, and one rug each. When once retired we attempted to compose ourselves to rest; but with myself and some others, it was wholly nugatory. I could, with more ease and comfort, have slept, covered up in one of our North American snow banks—cold and hunger combined, (for there we were, out of the reach of individual charity, and suffered the consequence of the ration laws I have elsewhere described,) prevented my resting. My body became perfectly chilled, and my limbs so benumbed, that, although I paced the ward for the most of the night with a quickened step, yet I could not, for my life, shake completely off what I felt was the lassitude of death. That night's frost did its work; for to this distant day I do, and, most probably, to my last hour, shall feel its painful effects upon both my feet.

In a truly forlorn condition the morning dawned upon us, and soon brought our breakfast, which consisted of a quarter of a pound of ship biscuit, and one pint of oat meal gruel called, in the prison slang, "skilly," alias, "smiggins." The biscuit I could eat; but the gruel, notwithstanding my extreme hunger, I

could not endure. Immediately after the morning *meal* was consumed, the ten occupied wards were emptied, and thier tenants, were sent to the shore at work, raising an embankment upon the Chelsea beach, which was invariably washed away, at each succeeding high wind. We were then also unlocked, and *permitted* to carry our hammocks to the unsheltered upper deck, and there peragate for the day unemployed, save by furbishing our irons which we were directed to do, and answering the questions of every petty officer of the hulk who chose to interrogate us. By the bye, I had nearly forgotten to mention, that we were not wholly alone in our ward, for a felon was sent among us to sleep for the avowed purpose of "teaching us hulk manners, and hulk rules," and for the *disavowed* purpose of reporting contingent circumstances; the latter might as well have been omitted, for the sequel will show that we needed no minute watching, for our murmurs and complaints were not "breathed only in secret;" but were "*published* in London at the very threshold of St. James'."

*"Our dinner consisted of a very little salt, a pint of 'beef tea,' (i. e. the well skimmed liquid in which fresh beef had been boiled,) a half pound of half boiled beef, including bone, and one pound of the coarsest, sourest, blackest, and most unpalatable bread you can possibly imagine, made of horse beans and barley, as I am informed; the crust is generally burned, and as uneatable as a brick bat, but the residue is so adhesive,

*Extract of a letter I wrote to J. Hume, Esq., M. P., which was sent through the office of the Secretary of State.

that if you should roll a lump in your hand and throw it against the wall, it would there remain until torn away. The following day, instead of meat and broth, we got a half pint of sour "swipes," (ale,) and a quarter of a pound of tough dry cheese, with a rind so hard, that it could not be cut through by the force of the hand; indeed, I would as soon attempt to eat CAUCHOU. These dinners vary every third day, but the morning and evening *meals* are unvaried in their usual routine of *nauseous* oat meal."

In the morning I lost no time in applying for an addition to our beds, which was complied with. Therefore when the second night approached, after drinking my pint of *hot* gruel, I swung my hammock, retired to rest, and was awakened, by the morning gun invigorated and refreshed.

Another species, of what we termed affront, appeared in the shape of a being in the "convict garb," coming to our ward door, at retiring time, and reading the "church service," while we had to respond "amen" at the close of each prayer. We had always maintained the habit of morning and evening devotions in an extemporaneous method, and, therefore, felt this a grievance we ought not to submit to, without a trial to evade. This, with the provision, formed the subjects of a consultation among ourselves, when one of the men expressed himself very happily as follows: "I look upon the present fare, as wholly uncongenial to American constitutions: and to pray God in the language of England's dominant church, for that government which we would have gladly driven from the American Con-

continent, and for that Queen's welfare who had enslaved, and was starving us, was utterly inconsistent with Canadian patriotism: nay, it is treason to our cause; for it supplicates destruction to our interest. If we pray at all, let us pray for the success of the cause of truth, justice, and liberty! then if our desires are answered, it will be, for good and not for evil: and if we maintain the character we have tried to establish, we will not submit without remonstrance." Bravo! sounded from every tongue, and I was instantly deputed to wait on the Commander with a request to alter our provisions, and permit us to worship God in the form we preferred. That part relative to the worship, was immediately conceded; but to alter our rations, was more than his situation was worth, for he held the tenure of his office during the good will and pleasure of the principal superintendent; however he would confer with Mr. Williams, surgeon of the hospital, who, no doubt, would, on his recommendation, put us upon hospital diet, if we would consent to the change. I of course, was agreeable to any change, provided it would only oust the "skilly" and "brown tommy."

I returned to our lodgings and "reported progress," which gave general satisfaction. The change of diet was effected, and it then consisted of one pint of rice and milk in the morning, three fourths of a pound of good white bread, one fourth of a pound of good mutton, one potatoe, and a pint of broth, for dinner; and for supper, one pint of tea, well milked and sugared. This food was good but of very short allowance; yet the quality made up for quantity, and I felt myself greatly

relieved from the acidity of the stomach and lassitude that the ship's diet produced. A diarrhoea had commenced that I verily believe would have terminated the existence of some of our men had not this change taken place.

The third day after arrival we received per a convict servant, an order to repair to a certain ward, and have our "likeness" taken." We went to the place designated, and were individually brought before the Commander, and closely interrogated by him as follows, while every reply was carefully inserted in an immense folio, by a convict clerk:

"What is your name? What is your age? What is your trade? What is your religion? Where is your native place? What were you tried for? Where were you arrested? Where were you tried? What was your sentence? (Ans. death—not satisfactory.) What was your commuted sentence? (Ans. transportation.) For what length of time? (do not know.) 'Put them down life.' When were you tried? When did you leave Canada? Are you married? (if married) Is your wife living? Where does she reside? Of what religion is she? Have you any children? How many males? How many females? What sex is the oldest? What sex is the youngest? What are their respective ages? Are your parents living? Where do they reside? What is their native country? What are their respective ages? What is their religion? Can they read? Can they write or keep accounts? Can you read, write or keep accounts? What is your number?"

After the answers to these questions were duly recorded each one of us, in rotation, was directed to strip naked to the waist, and up to the knee, when every spot, scar, mole, and other mark on the person—color of the hair on the head and person—color and shape of the eye and brow—shape of mouth, nose, and chin, with the general appearance of the features; and, finally, the number of teeth lost; with our height, weight, and every other indication whereby our person might be identified, in the event of an attempt at escape, were particularly inserted, and afterward read over to each, and signed with his own hand.

This then completed our “likenesses;” and they were so particularly taken, that either of us could have been detected at any place, by those descriptions.

Those small tokens made of paper, in the shape of hearts, that I have before mentioned, here soon became beneficial to me and others; as I had the good fortune to exhibit some of them to an officer on board, who was so taken with the curiosity, that he begged, and carried them on shore, where Miss Strickland,* who kept a Bazar, prized them very highly, and sent off several sheets of colored paper, to have a lot made for her, with strict orders for “the maker’s name and patriotic mottoes to be carefully imprinted upon them.” This manouver had to be done “on the sly,” but it obtained several loaves of good bread. On the approach of St. Valentine’s day, which is highly regarded there, the demand was greatly increased, and our pay re-

*Compiler of the Queen of Scots Letters.

doubled; but these, at last, becoming an "old story," recourse was had to small boxes, and horse hair rings, with partial success for a time.

I mention this little circumstance as elucidatory of the ingenuity of man, when reduced to necessity; it not only furnished the occasional luxury of an additional *loaf*, but, likewise, the cause for many remarks upon the industrious habits, and inventional powers of the American character, that gained us respect, and good opinion.

The officers, generally, were indeed very agreeable, and took apparently, some pleasure in conversing with us, particularly in respect to our grievances, and the condition of the Canadas; when they would occasionally draw conclusions from the information so obtained, and make contrast between what they would call "the happy state of North America, and poor *beautiful England*."

An assistant Surgeon, a young man of considerable talent and promise, (a Mr. Elliot,) one day, after passing many eulogiums upon "favored America," where he would really like to emigrate to, if it was in his power, said, "you complain of the provisions you receive here, but I can tell you there are six millions of Britains *free* subjects, who would feel themselves happy in getting one half you do; though you think it is short allowance, and coarse stuff; yes, there are thousands who annually commit crime for no other purpose than to become imprisoned in these cages of infamy, and to avoid a residence in the parish workhouse. Indeed, to an abode there, I should myself prefer trans-

portation, and take my chance amid the congregated mass of perfidy in New South Wales."

This information was even correct; for I have been since told, by several on board that hulk, and very many here, *that, although their food was coarse and scanty, and they were, in reality, the slaves of caprice, yet the whole was far superior to what they had usually been accustomed to—that they had never known satiety, and would not exchange present bondage, under the cat, for their former freedom!!* Is there no remedy for this unhallowed condition? Could not the *great* British government devise some means to curtail this cause of so vast an amount of criminal abandonment? Indeed, it could be done, notwithstanding the late assertion of a prominent Minister, "that the distress was beyond the reach of Parliamentary enactment." The secret is, *they will not listen to a syllable on retrenchment.* A moderately less sordid policy, would relieve their paupers of one half their present misery; but such a step would reduce the aristocracy to the *contemptuous* necessity of economizing. The poor laborer would be raised too near the level of the lordling, and be no longer obliged to crouch beneath their withering scowl, nor stand at an humble distance, with hat in hand, *implo*ring employment at any price, to *only* momentarily check approaching starvation. Grant the people justice, make them less miserable, less depraved, less dependant, and they will stand up more like men, to *de*mand what is their due. The lordling is so engrossed by his own vicious pursuits, and the gratification of his own sordid passions—that he heeds not the cries for

bread—the voice that sounds like a trumpet from the tombs of starved millions, as a warning of impending wo. Avarice closes every avenue to their hearts, and not a ray of compassion finds its way there, to soften their obduracy—power and aggrandizement are their whole aim—tyranny and misery are the effects of their success; while they who commiserate, and would remedy the prevailing evils, are either crushed beneath the foot of power, or are suffered to spend their days in vain attempts, limiting their benevolence to the wretched of their own immediate neighborhood.

What a load of wo is in store for the “*tyrants of England;*” and as assuredly as there is a just God ruling the destinies of the nations of the earth, she will receive her full weight.

But I am indulging in portraying what you were personally acquainted with years ago.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XIII.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

April, 1841.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: Soon after we had become a little accustomed to the circumstances of our new abode and dress, we began to think of complying with the requests of our friends in London, by giving them a brief detail of all we had endured since the first insur-

rectionary movements in our Province, as Mr. Greenham had, for that purpose, brought off a good supply of paper; pens, and ink. He also had brought several letters from Joseph Hume, Esq., M. P., W. H. Ashurst, Esq., Mr. Waller, and some other gentlemen, with a great number from our countrymen in New-Gate. Mr. Hume particularly desired me to write for him a description of our situation, food, clothing, &c. on board the hulk, to enable him, if necessary, to apply at the proper place for an alleviation, which I did nearly the same as I have given yourself; and most probably I mentioned the circumstance of having applied to the officers on board, for a removal from the ward we inhabited, on account of the extreme cold, to another we had discovered to be vacant, that had been used as a "dead house," but then was "cleared out," another having been substituted for it, in which I had been unsuccessful, mainly through the undeserved evil opinion of the principal surgeon of the hospital, excited by the pestilential communications of the *traitor Beemer*; for the surgeon held a violent antipathy toward me from the day of my placing the letter in the office, where he must have seen and read it, on which account I believe he made us return to the ship's from Hospital diet. However, be that as it may, and whether I did relate that particular incident or not, I cannot now recollect, as I did not retain a copy of the letter; for writing was rendered extremely difficult from the cold: Yet it was apparent that something was wrong in his estimation, for my letter was closely followed by one from him, in which he indulged in un-

heard of virulence and vituperation against me, that produced a short note from Mr. Hume, enclosing one from the Under Secretary of State, requesting it might be returned to him with remarks.

Mr. Hume's note, the Secretary's letter, and my reply, I subjoin, to permit you to judge of the spirit manifested therein, which you can do better by a perusal of the originals, than by my conclusions.

“BRYANSTON'S SQUARE, 13th February, 1839.

“Mr. Hume begs to send the answer he has received from the Under Secretary of State, to the complaints which Mr. Wait made to Mr. Hume, of the accommodation and treatment of the Canadian prisoners. And Mr. Hume hopes their unfortunate situation will be made as comfortable as the rules, applicable to all prisoners under orders for transportation, will admit of. Mr. Hume requests the letter may be returned, with any observations Mr. Wait may think proper to make in relation thereto; but Mr. Hume hopes that no unnecessary trouble will be given to either party.

“Mr. Benj'n Wait, York Hulk.”

Thus ended Mr. Hume's laconic, repulsive note: yes, and thus ended his *boasted* liberal endeavors in bringing about a “restoration to our sorrowing families,” or of “an alleviation” of the horrid sufferings we were then enduring. Perhaps the intimation at the close of Mr. Fox Maule's letter, had the expected effect of deterring him from his promised kindness.* However, be that as it may, we heard nothing farther from

*Since my return I have learned by Mrs. Wait, that Mr. Hume intimated to her, while in England, that had her husband regarded truth more in his complaints, he would not have abandoned him. “*Truth more,*” here means, less *independence*—less *bitterness* of feeling.

him, not even an acknowledgment of the receipt of my reply to, and the return of Mr. Maule's letter.

"HOME SECRETARY'S OFFICE, }
February 10, 1839. }

"My Dear Sir:

"I am directed by the Secretary of State, to return you the letter written and signed by the convict Wait, in behalf of his companions, purporting to give you a true account of their situation on board of the York hulk. I accompany it with some remarks I was desired to make, which, it is hoped, will convince you that his sufferings are not as great as he represents.

"I have written to the officer on board the hulk, and find they occupy the ward we directed they should be placed in; it is the same from which the boys were taken a month or two ago, when they were sent to the penitentiary at Rye, on the isle of Wight; and excepting the late alterations of the weather, I do not see why it is not as habitable for its present, as for its former occupants. He complains of the two preliminary processes of cutting off the hair, and assuming prison dress.

"The reason assigned for the first is, to prevent the generating of vermin, which every means must be used to guard against in a community like the hulks; and I do not anticipate its being done in an *'inhuman manner.'* The assumption of prison dress is, to afford a corresponding chance of detection, in an attempt to escape, when on shore at work.

"As to the coldness of the ward they inhabit, I am told that a hanging stove was allowed them during the greatest severity of the weather.

"And the provisions supplied them, is the same in quantity and quality, furnished to thousands of prisoners before them, by the government, without complaint; and several years experience, and the united opinions of various physicians, have taught us that it is perfectly wholesome, and sufficient for the actual necessities of any man, notwithstanding the assertion of the convict Wait, and his fellow convicts, to the contrary.

"There were no orders issued from this office, for a difference of treatment from the *other* felons, except that, by their own re-

quest, they were to be kept separate from them, and not to be sent out to work. Wait may be assured, that his letters, when written with such an independant spirit, and in such a tone of presumption, cannot pass unheeded.

“When you have perused this letter, please return it, with whatever pertinent remarks may occur to you. And I am directed to say, you will do well to abstain from receiving the convict Wait’s complaints of ill treatment, when in the custody of the officers of our government, for he is a cunning, designing fellow, and his associate convicts are his dupes.

“I am, Sir, your obd’t

“Humble serv’t,

(Signed,)

“FOX MAULE,

“Under Secretary of State.

“Joseph Hume, Esq., M. P.”

The contents of the foregoing letter were astounding indeed. The frequent repetition of “convict Wait,” and the “other felons,” sounded in my brain for a long while. I could not imagine what had been the Secretary’s motives for descending to such low, abusive language, or what ends, save traduction, he had to answer by it. However, I deemed it giving me a license to reply in an equally disrespectful style. It accounted at once for the *hauteur* with which the surgeon had already treated me, and the coldness of Mr. Hume’s laconic note. My reply was as follows:

“YORK HULK, February 15, 1839.

“My Dear Sir:

“Your *laconic* note of the 13th inst. was handed me by Mr. Greetham, and which was accompanied by Mr. Fox Maule’s singularly sophistical letter; the perusal of it has truly given me no little surprise.

“I am indeed grieved to discover the Secretary capable of such low, scurrilous expressions, and assertions so positively false; and which, I have reason to believe, he knew to be so. For, on re-

ceiving your letter, I went with it directly to the commander, whom I supposed to be the "officer on board" he means, and from whom he ought to have received his information. But he is equally surprised with myself, and cannot surmise what "officer on board" could have originated such falsehoods. I cannot give him, (Mr. Maule,) credit for being even ordinarily 'cunning,' for mark his position; when speaking of the ward we occupy, he says, 'it is the same from which the boys were taken a *month* or *two* ago, when sent to the penitentiary, * * and *excepting* the *late alterations* of the weather, I do not see why it is not as habitable for its present as its former occupants.'

"Here allow me to remark, that 'a month or two ago,' 'the late alterations of the weather' had not taken place; that it was then warm, but now it is *cold*; and we all know that a room naturally cold from its locality, is much more 'habitable' in the fine weather of summer, or autumn, than during the cold, frosty months of winter. It is true, 'the ward is the same from which the boys, (or a part of them,) were taken,' not '*a month* or *two*,' but *three months ago*. But even suppose it had been during last week that they were removed, I would appeal to himself, or any other person equally inimical to humanity, to say, whether the atmosphere of any space, when occupied by eighty persons, would not be heightened far above what it is possible to be, when inhabited by only nine? For not only the air of the four different wards in which the eighty boys were lodged, but likewise of a chapel, calculated to accommodate five or six hundred persons, is open to us nine Canadians.

"And further, his assertion about the 'hanging stove,' is an utter fabrication; as no stove, of any kind, ever made its appearance in or near our ward, during our occupancy.

"As to the 'preliminary processes of cutting off the hair, and assuming prison dress,' I have only to reassure you, the former *was inhumanly done*; and, when combined with the scantiness of our wardrobe and the frigidness of our lodgings, have placed us in circumstances very nearly approaching death. And I am quite sure that our security did not render it an imperative necessity to invest our persons with the habiliments of the hulk, and our legs

with the iron bands of slavery, 'as a corresponding chance for detection, in an attempt to escape when on shore at work,' for we are never permitted to leave the ship's sides; and he says their orders were against putting us at work.

"In regard to what is said about the wholesomeness of the diet, I can aver that six of the nine are now severely suffering by diarrhoea, purely the effect of the sour bread we are now forced to use, as we have again been put on the ship's diet. I dare say those gentlemen and surgeons who have pronounced this food good, wholesome, and sufficient, have never tried it themselves; and have, perhaps never seen it; and there is very good reason for no complaint being made by any English convict, for the 'cat' is the sure consequence of murmur, (called insolence.)

"But for my part, I protest, that unless some salutary change is soon effected, I fully expect my lifeless body will be spirited away through one of the port holes of this ship, as an article of traffic with some London quack, whose dirty laboratory my whitened bones may grace, beside others who have gone the same road, after having taught some half dozen students the art of dissection and anatomy.

"I do most sincerely hope my letters may 'not pass unheeded,' (as he is pleased to say,) but that they will have the effect desired, by causing an alleviation of some circumstances attending our residence here, or, at least, of bringing about an inquiry, which is very much required.

"What designs Mr. Maule has to answer by insulting helpless prisoners in his power, by applying to us the ignominious epithets of 'convicts and felons,' are, of course, best known to himself; and I have only to say, that it indicates, in my estimation, a mind of inferior intelligence, and cowardly principles.

"I certainly fancied I had good authority for saying, 'I presumed orders had been given for a treatment different from what was received by the felons on board; and, in fact, there is actually more difference existing, than I really relish; for they receive each two loaves of white bread per week, whereas the state prisoners obtain none. From the surgeon, Mr. Williams, we have repeatedly received abusive language, that savors more of the Bil-

lingsgate creature, than the gentleman; and I ardently hope a removal from his proximity will soon be effected, though it be into perpetual slavery.

“In a former letter I particularly described our condition; not one syllable of which, although repugnant to the authorities, am I willing to retract.

“And now, in reply to your own note, I would merely say, that I am heartily sorry for having given as much trouble, necessary or unnecessary, as I have already done, to either party; and shall, for the future, endeavor, as much as possible, to abstain from it.

“I would here beg to tender, not only my own, but all my countrymen’s gratitude, for the kindness and generosity with which you seemed to have been actuated in espousing our causes, while, my dear sir, not only for myself, but in behalf of suffering humanity, I subscribe myself

“Yours truly,

“BENJAMIN WAIT.

“Joseph Hume, Esq. M. P., London.”

Of these letters I retained copies; and a few days after had an opportunity of exhibiting them to Mr. Capper, the principal superintendent, who had come to the hulks on a visit of enquiry, and remained for a week. He arrived on Saturday, and on Sunday he sent for me, while we were in the chapel listening to the murder of the story of Joseph, by an imbecile old priest, who occupied five Sabbaths in its relation. I had not been informed of the arrival of Mr. Capper, and consequently did not know for what purpose I was called from that *interesting* service, by the *convict-dressed servant*, who had merely announced that “Wait was wanted.” I followed, and was ushered into a finely fitted up apartment, where I observed a large, elderly man, seated at a table apparently deeply engaged in the perusal and checking of accounts. The convict

servant, (all the officers belonging to any of those establishments have each one or more servants selected from among the convicts, who do nothing but attend their master's bidding,) led me to the middle of the room, and touching his hat, said, "this is Wait, sir," then retired, without having attracted the slightest attention from the man of accounts.

I stood for some minutes, until I became exhausted, when I walked to the window, endeavoring to attract notice; but, without looking up, he said, "Wait, sit down, and I will talk to you presently;" then continued his employment. I sat down, happy in the privilege, and remained some half hour or more, before the ominous silence was again broken. I mention this incident, as it is what I conceive to be a pretty fair specimen of the general manners of English business men, which they practice more for the purpose of being thought eccentric, than through an engrossed attention; for I have been introduced to perhaps a score of men in the same manner since, who have invariably conducted as though one rule governed all, while in some cases not the slightest occasion could be discovered for such abstractedness.

When Mr. Capper had apparently come to the conclusion that it was necessary to make himself known, he surprised me by saying, "well, Wait, what did you want to say to me?" I replied, that I had not intimated to any person a desire to speak with him, in fact, did not know him whom I had the honor of addressing. "Oh, yes! yes, I wanted to talk with you; I believe you are one of the men sent from Upper Canada for

riot." I answered, that I had been transported for political offences, and would be glad to know the gentleman who had been kind enough to desire to speak to me. "Oh, I am the principal superintendent of the hulks, Mr. Capper, and I did not know but you had some complaints to make concerning your treatment by the officers." I told him I had no complaint to make against any officer save the Surgeon, who had not only treated us shamefully, but had likewise made some misrepresentations at the Secretary's office, which I desired he would inquire into and rectify. I also requested him to inform me what had been done with *fourteen* letters, that we had written and sent through his office, for America; and which were to have been put in the hands of our agents in London, who had been informed such letters were to come for them, to forward, some weeks since; which, however, had not been received by them. He replied, that he had delivered them, but two hours before leaving London. I desired permission to step to the ward and bring the letters that had passed, between the Secretary, Mr. Hume, and myself. These he perused, and promised to enquire into the facts; but, says he, "Mr. Williams says you have insulted him; yet I conceive that it is only your American manners he kicks at; and of course, you will, for the future, be less blunt in addressing him. Although you may have written nothing but what is positively true, yet it would have been better for you to have been silent, or, at least, not to have addressed Hume; for all he desires is to obtain something to use in bolstering up his decaying reputation.

Perhaps it would be better for you to *cut* his acquaintance now; for I can assure you, that when he has got all he can that may answer his ends, he will abandon you to shift for yourself, the worse for his interference. The secretary has been drawn into an error by somebody, and I will set him right; I will come to your ward tomorrow, *when* I want you all in."

On the following day he came, attended by Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Williams, and others; and the scene that took place I cannot omit, though I fear you will deem it too egotistical or frivolous; yet it goes to prove a particular trait of English character, that I am very desirous of holding up to scorn.

After we had been mustered in single file, Mr. Capper examined the ward, and questioned each one closely, as to how they fared, were treated &c. In our answers he found no faltering or equivocation. He also enquired how the mistake had occurred relative to the stove? I told him I thought Mr. Williams could best explain that, as he had originated it, who replied, that he had ordered one, but soon after, thinking we might burn up the ship, he had countermanded it. "Ah! indeed?" said Mr. C., "you then did give Wait occasion for charging you with known falsehood; and I discover, too, that he has had reason for his complaints of cold, which would be readily obviated, by hanging canvass along the grating; and I wish it attended to immediately." This suggestion was complied with, but not until the eleventh hour; for two days afterward, a fresh supply of convicts from London, filled the opposite and adjacent wards, so that we

were freed from cold; but on the other hand, were confused, and kept in excitement, by the continual swearing, fighting, and clamor of our neighbors; yet it gave us a fair opportunity of learning the character, and remarking the conduct of the wretches who inhabit those hot beds of iniquity. But to close the interview, Mr. Williams desired to learn whether the letters of complaint were written at the request of my companions, or at my own instance; "an individual inquiry would be most satisfactory, I thought, as all were present, and I was sure they would answer without fear." "Yes," said Mr. W. "if their audacity is equal to yours, I know, already, what they will say." "I dare say you do," I replied, "but conscious rectitude and *truth* needs not the aid of impudence or scurrility." Turning to Mr. C. he said, "did you ever hear such insolence from a convict;" then ordered me from the ward, that the men need not be "overawed" by my presence, or taught "effrontery," by my example. The evidence went to corroborate my statements fully. It was, then, "no more than [he] expected; but there was that honest Beemer, who would not endorse [my] doings; for he had already exposed our characters, in their true colors." "Indeed! I was glad to hear he had done it truly; but was fearful, from late discoveries, that truth would be sadly desecrated, by being associated with his, and certain other names; yet I felt as fearless of the '*expose*' threatened, as I did of the windy, ungallant conduct, I sometimes unnecessarily witnessed." Mr. C. soon terminated these retorts, and left us to our own private musings and consultations, which resulted

in a short note to Mr. Hume, signed by all but Beemer, corroborative of what I had written.

A day or two subsequent, the following document was signed and sent to the Secretary's office.

"To the Right Honorable Lord John Russell,

"Secretary of State for the Home Department:

"My Lord:

"We have to request your Lordship will favor us with an explanation, why *we*, being STATE PRISONERS, are confined in a *felon* prison, and treated and dressed as felons. We know of no precedent for such treatment, and consequently feel surprised to find ourselves thus circumstanced by the British government, whose boast has always been, a liberality to *prisoners of state*, and therefore enter our solemn protest against it.

"We have the honor to be

"your Lordship's ob't serv'ts.

"BENJAMIN WAIT,

"SAM'L CHANDLER,

"ALEX'R McLEOD,

"JOHN VERNON,

"JOHN J. McNULTY,

"JAMES WAGGONER,

"NORMAN MALLARY,

"GEO. B. COOLEY,

"GARRET VAN CAMP,*

We were induced to hazard the foregoing protest, by the discovery, through the Under Secretary's letter, of the rancorous feeling existing toward us in the hearts of men in high office. Not that Mr. Maule was, of *himself*, a man of much importance; but sentiments written by him in a public capacity, must have emanated from his superior in office; indeed, he intimated

*James Gemmel being in the hospital, was not applied to for his signature.

as much; and we therefore held Lord John accountable for the conduct of his immediate servant. And, although our friends in New-Gate might be successful, yet our cases were hopeless, and could not be made worse.

We felt assured of harsh measures; for we knew that when the ministers were once so egregiously offended, they would scarcely stop short of some excessive stretch of power; for in the case of prison discipline, they have absolute control. There is no censuring power—no “public opinion” to govern in that. We saw the die was cast, and the result disadvantageous to us; and that boldness could not augment our misfortune, therefore determined to combat every irregularity, and submit to no onerous proceeding, without exhibiting, at least, *a spirit* of firm resistance. I dare say this spirit conduced largely toward producing our immediate removal into transportation; for the government knew full well, that, in a colony so distant, and under arbitrary administration, all complaint would be futile—*nay*, would be considered insolence, and punished rigorously.

Many letters passed between ourselves and solicitors, as well as fellow countrymen in New-Gate; but my correspondence is already too much extended, and I must omit all, or, at least, extract *very briefly*; for I have much still to relate.

Mr. Greetham very frequently came off, not only to see and bring us letters, but also as Coroner, to hold inquests on the bodies of all who died on board; which, however, I did not know was the case, until I one day

observed a dozen rough looking boatmen come to the hulk, followed by him, and proceed to the hospital, where they remained perhaps five minutes, when they left the ship as they came, each in his own boat. Mr. G. having some letters to deliver to me, gave an opportunity for inquiring what the visit of those men meant? when I was informed that they had constituted a coroner's jury, which he was frequently under the necessity of calling, as the government orders an inquest to be held upon the bodies of all persons who die in any of its prisons or charity institutions, which operates as a sort of quietus upon the minds of the people, who might otherwise clamor about "foul play." But, then, if I should guess from the appearance of these men, they seldom, if ever, give you the trouble of enquiry, and never elicit mal-practice. In fact, they did not spend time enough on board to more than be empannelled and say, "died by a visitation of God;" and that verdict must have been dictated, for they looked too ignorant to originate such a conception. "It is indeed very true, that they never give me any trouble in explanations, for they are generally men who require all their time for the support of a family; and, therefore, the less delay the better." I was told that the coroner obtained two pounds for each verdict, and sat upon some one and a half hundred cases yearly, without once elucidating the slightest irregularity. The pay assists in enriching one individual, while it impoverishes many, without the most trifling beneficial results!

The letters brought off were from Mr. Ashurst, Messrs. Wixon, Miller, and Parker. Mr. A. says:

"The cases of the twelve prisoners here, (London,) have been very fully argued in the court of Exchequer, and, on Tuesday last, adjourned until next term. The consequence of this will be, that the twelve in London will remain here, and YOU AND YOUR COMPANIONS WILL NOT BE SENT OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

"I shall try and have you brought to London, but fear there is but slight hopes of that. Nevertheless, continue your communications, for I want full materials, and address them to me as your attorney. * * *

"It is said you petitioned for pardon, and consented to the conditions of your pardon. I wish your attention to that point particularly." * * *

Mr. Wixon details the course pursued in bringing their cases into court, and finally the adjournment, when he says:

"If we are eventually unsuccessful, we will yet have gained one great point, which will convince the world that *we have been unjustly dealt with*: and obtain the *sympathy* of the good in every country on the face of the globe. * * *

"I have this day seen one of your letters, which is to be published in the 'True Sun,' a paper warmly enlisted in our interests. * * *

"By the bye, I have exposed Capt. Morton, and the Capt. Ross voyage in good style, and if he is not satisfied with that he can have more yet; so I think after all, my way of duelling is better than yours. * * *

"There is warm work in Canada about these days. Hanging and shooting is the order of the day there; but we are snugly out of harm's way here. * * *

"I learned in court, that my sentence is *fourteen years after arrival in V. D. L.*—Mr. Watson's is 'life,' and the others are yet as ignorant as ever of what time they are *ordered*, (*not sentenced*) for." * * *

This Mr. Wixon had but one leg, was a Baptist clergyman, and whose only crime was, having acted as assistant editor of the "Correspondent and Advocate," during the absence of Mr. McKenzie, the proprietor, in England, as an agent for the people, some years prior to the insurrection.

It would indeed appear, that Arthur was rather in a strait for subjects of cruelty, when he was ordered for transportation; but that is not the greatest curiosity of his case. His time of duranee would not commence until arrival in the penal Island; and he might be detained on the way an equal length of time, while age and infirmity were fast hastening him to the grave.

L. W. Miller, the gallant young American of whom you have heard so much, concludes his letter with some just strictures upon the British government, by saying,

"We have been in a continued excitement, owing to the '*glorious uncertainty of the law.*' * * * What the result of this affair will be, no one can tell; I guess, however, It will have a tendency to open the eyes of Britons, and put a stop to their boasting of the superiority of English laws and institutions over those of other nations, inasmuch as that '*excellent safeguard of the liberty of the subject, the habeas corpus act,*' so long lauded to the skies, has been completely *shown up* at last, and proved a mere *phantom*—a '*will o' the wisp.*' * * * Yet I flatter myself, notwithstanding the decision of the Queen's Bench Judges against us, that our cases are not quite as bad as they appear," &c. &c.

Poor fellow! He felt quite sanguine in the hope of a happy result, to the enquiry, but was disappointed; for his case, with John Grant's, being similar to ours, produced the same end—we being sent away previous to the termination of the instituted investigation, the

Ministry would not hazard the imputation of partiality, by liberating him at the same time with Wixon, Parker, and their party. They, therefore, (Miller and Grant,) with Beemer, (the traitor,) and Gemmel, (whom we had left sick in the York hospital,) arrived at Hobarttown in January, of 1840, and were sent on the roads at work, in horrid destitution and want.

In addition to these letters, we received occasional numbers of the "Weekly True Sun," which contained all the arguments made in the cases of our friends, a perusal of which not only led us, but every unprejudiced mind, to anticipate a release.

An officer of the hulk handing me a paper in which the arguments were published, said, "well, Wait, that paper contains joyful intelligence for you. Your countrymen in New-Gate, although not yet acquitted, will be very soon; for the arguments against the *legality* of transporting from Upper Canada, are so conclusive, that, if the Queen is not too d—bly afraid of you, she will be glad to send you all home again, and think herself thus well rid of Arthur's blunders." But these hopes and opinions were formed on the presumptive evidence of England's doing justice; and, consequently were illusory—for *we* did not remain to learn the conclusion—but were sent hastily away.

I must here conclude this long letter, and my narrative of events while in England, with the exception of a few hulk anecdotes, which I will briefly relate in my next.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XIV.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.
May, 1841.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: I will now merely relate a few incidents that came under my notice before embarking for this place. I have before hinted that Beemer was the traitor to whom we owed our want of success in a certain *attempt* at sea. The discovery was effected in the following manner: we had received the form of a petition from Mr. Ashurst, desiring the government to place in his hands all letters or communications directed to any of us, that might arrive in England, and we were requested to sign and return it. Beemer refused; which, with his conduct in writing in another ward distinct from ours, under the eye of the Surgeon, as well as some other appearances, made us suspect his faithlessness rather more strongly than before. The consequence was, a close and systematic investigation among ourselves in his presence, when one complete chain of treachery and false conduct was discovered, unbroken since our embarkation at Niagara. The first evidence was given by G. Van Camp, a poor, innocent, simple, quiet Dutchman, who was Beemer's chain companion on our passage from Quebec; and this was followed up by a forcible seizure of his port-folio, which contained a petition to Lord John Russell, tracing his own steps throughout the whole course, and claiming *freedom* as the boon of his *fratricidal* conduct. In the petition, he also presumed upon the commendations of

Dr. Williams and Capt. Morton; but this did not end his communication, for he likewise attempted to brand our characters with infamy, by charges of a dishonorable nature, which could, in reality, attach to none but himself. This discovery put us on the *qui vive*; and by a little inducement, we obtained a perusal of all his correspondence, from the fellow he employed to write for him, as he was very illiterate, only able to write, yet not to compose or spell—thus being enabled to counteract all his malice through the aid of our countrymen in London.

Elucidative of the utter failure, through the inefficiency of the British penal code, in the attempts to humanize hardened villains by promiscuously congregating them in these hulks, I have a large collection of anecdotes, but I cannot copy them now—for I want to devote this letter to other descriptions—suffice it therefore to say, that I will guarantee, if a man is sent there for two years, though naturally circumspect in his conduct, that he goes out a polished villain, a *graduate* from the college of crime. The majority of the residents are between the ages of eighteen and thirty, though some as young as twelve; and a few thin, toothless, grey headed, wretched looking fellows, numbering at least sixty *extended winters*, are seen hobbling about the decks the whole day, submitting calmly to the insults and gibes of the officers and younger felons, as if it was their “meat and their drink.”

The most surprising sight and condemnatory of British institutions, that I witnessed, was the arrival, at the hulk, on their way to the Penetentiary on the Isle of

Wight, of fifty boys under ten—an age in which it can scarcely be imagined they were capable of committing offences worthy the sentence of transportation, but it was so—for they were all condemned for seven, ten, or fourteen years to V. D. L. One little sprightly fellow, who said his age was seven years and five months, I took a fancy to enquire of concerning his history—he surprised me by saying he had been tried for picking a gentleman's pocket of a purse containing nine guineas and thirteen shillings with a few "*haporths*." But how in the name of common sense could you pick a *man's* pocket? Why you could scarce reach his waist. But, "oh I didn't frisk his pocket—I was in a stall where *a* sells rings—he come'd in, and pick'd out one that suited him—just as he was going to pay for it, the shopman called him over to t'other end of the room, and I whip't up his purse and run'd away with it; I meets my sister close by the door, and slips it into her apron, and she goes right home and giv it to mother but I run on till a 'trap' nabbed me because I was running—the gentleman come up and said I stole his *purse*, they frisked me and couldn't find it; but he swore I took it; so I got lagg'd for seven years. Mother keeps the money, tho', and I'm sorry I couldn't have the bit o' plum puddin she promised me, if I would get her a good *swag* that day." Have you done any thing before? "Oh yes, I picked up a handkerchief and two *testers* the day before and mother give me a penny bunn and haporth of *yale*." Have you got any brothers? "Yes, George was transported with father, to V. D. L., for *taking* plate from the Duke's house; and I've got

two sisters, one in the house of correction, and one at home, who goes every day for mother's *quarteen* of rum and pot of *yale*." What! a father and brother in V. D. L., a sister in the house of correction, and you on the way to a penitentiary? "no, no; I'm transported." A Dr. Elliott, standing by, explained "that it was customary to pass the sentence of transportation, and then leave it optional with the ministry to retain them at the Penitentiaries or send them on; and with boys, the latter is frequently done, when there remains but a few months of their sentence unexpired." This I have found, is the case with men also, two of whom came in the same ship with me, whose sentence expired in six months after arrival here.

My next inquiry was of the one I took to be the oldest; he was nine years and some months, and was "lagged innocently for ten years to the '*Bay*'." He had no parents. "I was bound, by the parish warden, to a brush maker, who beat me so unmercifully that I couldn't stay—so run'd away and come up to London, where I lay in a cellar, on straw, for four nights; and could get nothing to eat all the time. One day I was so hungry I thought I should starve; so I begged of some gentlemen, who swore at me, and threatened to send me to the work house. I asked some ladies, but they wouldn't give me any thing; so I lay down on the steps of a house, and a police man took me to a station house. I cried, and told him I was hungry; but he wouldn't give me any thing to eat until the next day, when I was taken to the inspectors. I told them where I came from, and who my master was

and how he had beat me. They sent for him, and scolded him—then sent me back with him. He used me harder than ever, but gave me a new pair of trowsers. I soon went away again, but he followed me, and swore I stole his trowsers; so I got ten years '*lagging*' to do, for it." I asked him if he would go back, providing they would allow it, and put up with his master's beatings? His answer was, that he would be better off, and would rather be flogged every day, than go back to his old master.

These boys had been away scarcely a week before the 'atter mentioned, and some others, were sent back to the hulk as irreclaimable characters. The lads said it was for breaking open the cellar and taking some potatoes to roast, and some of the boys "*come it!*" on them.

The foregoing is a scene Americans will hardly believe; nevertheless it is true, and not of rare occurrence either. These little villains have mostly been tutored by their parents, and trained to theft and crime; and between five and eight hundred of them are annually sent out to this island, as servant boys and butlers to the settlers.

Among the arrivals from London, (for when we were on the hulk it was the season for replenishing,) was a band of wretched looking fellows, clad in rags, (having sold all their better clothing to our countrymen in New-Gate,) and excessively filthy, with beard apparently a month old—clearly exhibiting the imperative necessity of the "two preliminary processes of cutting off the hair and assuming prison dress," in that case at least.

They were loaded with galling irons and seemed to be weighed down with hunger and fatigue. I stood near the quarter deck and saw them searched. Some had tobacco and money stowed away in their rags, others in their mouths and elsewhere; but few escaped with a shilling left, as the examiners were adepts in the search, and what was not willingly given up, was a legal prey to the finder. There were twenty-seven of them convicted at the last assize in London, for street robbery, and house breaking; and were all sent on the same ship with us, to this place; after turning in, they could be heard until very late, entertaining their hammock neighbors with tales of their vagrant exploits, while to question them about their offences, you would imagine they were suffering wrongfully, forcibly reminding one of an Irish convict, who wished to elicit the sympathy of a passer by for a "pipe of tobacco or a *shilling*." "But pray," says the accosted, "what brought you here?" "Oh," answers pat with a menial touch of the hat, "it was for *stoleing* a halter, that I got fourteen years." "What a hardship!" repeats the gentleman, "here's a half crown for you." "But stop," returns pat, while *fobbing the shiner*, "I've not tould ye that a horse was at the end on't."

The hulk rules were very strict—the cat was the sure consequence of money or tobacco being found in the possession of a prisoner, and solitary confinement on bread and water, for the slightest traffic—yet money and tobacco were among them—but they commanded an extraordinarily high value, and were great commodities for traffic; for instance, a penny could buy

a man's daily allowance of "brown tommy" and meat; or a "ha'penny" his cheese and "swipes." When the "shore laborers" were passing down the ship's sides, an officer, usually the first mate, stood at the gangway to "frisk" them, to prevent their carrying any thing on shore belonging to the ship; and the same precaution was taken when coming on board, that no tobacco, or other illicit articles, might be brought off. An Hibernian, who had at home, in an affray, received a blow on the head, for friendship's sake, that cracked his skull affecting his brain, and occasioning fits of hallucination, was bringing in his mouth, a small portion of the forbidden weed. Unfortunately the officer, (Mitchard,) either having some intimation of it or deep grudge against him, unceremoniously thrust his fingers into Pat's mouth, who, as unformally compressed them rather tightly. The mate struck the man in the face; the blow was returned, when the poor Irishman was brought to the deck by some bystanders. He was taken immediately to the quarter deck, where he received the sentence of "thirty-six on the bare back, in sight of all hands, on the following morning at eight A. M." Consequently, at the hour appointed, the men were all mustered on deck, where the poor fellow was lashed to the mizzen mast, naked to the waist, prepared to receive the stripes from the boatswain, who stood awaiting orders to begin, with his cat in hand: which was, in this case, a stick of about eighteen inches long, with nine thongs, three feet long, twisted as hard as wire, and the thickness of a man's small finger. The surgeon, whose duty it is to witness these scenes, was there

and the commandant also, who offered the culprit an abatement of one half the sentence, if he would humbly beg the pardon of the offended dignitary, who was likewise present. But throwing a wild gaze upon him, he looked the rage of a thousand demons, and told them to do their worst, and he would "yet have the hearts blood of the brute," who really was a concatenation of all that was evil. This answer was considered insolence, and the boatswain was ordered to lay it on without forbearance. He ran his fingers carefully down the cat, separating the thongs, so as to give each a chance to do its duty; then whirling the whip about his head, and rising, with a spring forward, gave the first blow, that, in reality, ought to have counted nine. It told a horrible tale upon the back of the poor fellow, whose skin was cut through in a dozen places; while he, without writhing, calmly cast his eyes about, as if to ask, "do I bear it well?" But a painful thrill ran through the crowd, and a sudden catching of the breath, or sigh, that was perfectly audible. The blows were repeated at intervals of forty seconds, with the same result, until two dozen were received; when the same proposal of abatement of the remainder was made with the same effect. The flagellation went on; and when completed, the poor man's back was literally beat into a jelly. He was loosened and let down a wild maniac, and the first movement was a rush at the wretch who was the cause of such inhuman severity; but, unfortunately, he was "brought up" by some of the guards standing by. The common punishment for petty offences, is confinement, on bread and water, in a soli-

tary "black hole," where the person never sees the light within his durance, which sometimes extends to seven, and even ten days.

Trafficing is strictly forbidden, yet often winked at; as, for instance, a blind man was allowed four gallons per day of the oatmeal, which he exchanged for the white bread of the poor, half starved laborers. He also collected all the bones of the messes, pounded them fine, and boiled them—in that manner extracting considerable fat, which he sold for butter—known as the "blind Jimmy's Butter." Either, *if reported*, would have gained him a few days solitary; yet the "skilly" was allowed him, and it was well known he could not consume it himself.

It was a standing rule to muster the men each Sabbath, with one bare leg, to observe their cleanliness, when their shoes must be greased, or solitary was the consequence. Now, strange to say, no provision was made for oil, and there were no possible means of obtaining but by stealing it from the lamps, two of which remained in each ward; further, should a man be detected in such theft, he would be subjected to two dozen stripes on the bare back; and to exhibit the fallacy of such rules, a man is liable to a charge for insolence. Thus, then, he is placed between the horns of a dilemma, one of which seldom fails goring him; and he generally prefers the risk of the theft, in which he is the least liable to be detected. In our cases, these rules were not enforced, "for," as observed by the commandant, "the Americans are men of unimpeachable moral characters—perfectly quiet and orderly—

but they *will not be coerced* into compliance with any rules they consider unreasonable. They never presume upon any privileges, but when they want such, they send Wait to ask. They have thus obtained various favors that I could not have granted to other men; for instance, the use of the carpenter's shop, where it is a pleasure to observe to what extent their ingenuity and industry continue, in the manufacture of such trifles as are in their power. And at night, before they retire to their beds, I have frequently been delighted in listening to their devotions; yet they will not use our church service, and it would be ungenerous to require it; for I think them devout and pious, and know them praying men."

These remarks in favor of our character, were not the only temporal advantages received from our devotional exercises, for they, in a manner, operated also, as a beneficial check upon the conduct of some two or three of our number, who were rather vulgarly inclined. And in a spiritual sense, the good results were incalculable upon our minds, our hearts, and our feelings. Reading and prayer, enabled us to look *above* for consolation, in the hour of suffering and sorrow; and to give place to that hope which would not only keep us from despondency, but lead us to feel that "all things would work together for good"—that God, in his all wise providence, would give us strength according to our need, and ultimately return us to our homes and to our families.

I can assure you that we have been enabled to endure every calamity and evil that has since befallen us,

without much murmur or complaint, while my hope in a return to home and to freedom, is now more brilliant than ever—rendered so by a letter I have quite recently received from the still active participator in my afflictions. She has returned to Canada, and already had an interview with the Governor General, who seems favorably inclined. But more of these things anon, and I here close for the present.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XV.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

July, 1841.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: About the 10th March, a ship, ostensibly known as the "Bay Ship," cast anchor at Spithead; and orders came off for 140 men to be selected from the residents of the two hulks, (Leviathan and York,) at Portsmouth, to make up the cargo for Van Dieman's land, already consisting of 100 men from the prison ships at Woolwich. The list for the York was some two days completing; during which time not a whisper was heard designating those who were to go; not a name was divulged. I felt a slight presentiment that our names might be added, and consequently wrote my opinions to our friends in London, desiring them to make preparations for the event, if they proved prophetic. Meeting Mr. Nicholson on the

deck, I enquired if it was the intention of the government to send the American prisoners by that ship; but he replied that he was not at liberty to give satisfaction on that point; yet he had no doubt but we would have timely notice of any intended removal. Thus, then, my suspicions on that head, were allayed, and we continued our writing preparatory to the expected investigation.

On the morning of the 12th March, before we were dressed, several officers were engaged in the selection and separation of those to go, from those to remain; and as they came out of the ward adjoining ours, were asked if they had any orders for us; the reply was "no." This monosyllable created a laugh among us, for one of our number, (Mr. Waggoner,) had said, as soon as he awaked, that "we should be sent on board the bay ship to-day, and no mistake;" yet he still persisted, and would stake his life upon the correctness of his impressions. About eight the turnkey came and unlocked the door, when we, as usual, were prepared, with hammock on shoulders, to sally forth and deposit them on the upper deck. But "stop," says the guard, "I want to muster your hammocks and bedding." This was the first move or expression that was, in the slightest degree, indicative of their intention toward us. As soon as the muster was completed, he said, "now my fine fellows, I have to inform you, that you have but five minutes to join the other prisoners in the chapel destined for V. D. L."

Those still in the ward, were McLeod, Wait, Chandler, Waggoner, McNulty, Vernon, Mallary, Cooly,

and Van Camp, ordered for embarkation; Gemmel had been in the hospital, since arrival; and the night previous to this, the surgeon had ordered Beemer there also; and the day we took our passage, he was under the operation of an emetic. We all knew why his retention was effected, but it eventually, by his own folly, proved of no avail. Miller, Grant, and Reynolds, the others, were in London; so that our number was dwindled down to nine.

Although I should have preferred transportation, to a long continuance in that prison, yet the information of so sudden a removal, fell like an electric shock upon me, as it was utterly unexpected, after so many repeated assurances, from various individuals in office and elsewhere. I therefore begged time to write our agent, but was refused. What trifles we could hastily collect, of our small stock in the ward, were carried with us, most particularly my portfolio, containing all our correspondence in England, and the notes I had made there. This has since been my inseparable companion, and I design conveying it to America, if I am ever so happy as to return myself.

On arriving at the place of rendezvous, we found eighty or more, all invested with *double irons** and the habiliments of the "Bay ship," the same as the *hulk* dress, saving a want of the guernsey, and the exchange of the hat for a striped woollen cap. There were prepared for our ablution, several tubs of water; and sev-

*Two rings or *bazzles*, for the leg, with a chain between them about two feet in length, and weighing about eight pounds.

eral shaving automatons were placed in requisition for clearing both head and face.

These preparations were scarcely completed before I was called to the quarter deck, where I found the commander and his *mate*, Mitchard, engaged in overhauling our baggage. I was ordered to select what belonged to myself, and then directed to open my trunk, from which Mitchard threw out every article, and then said, I might retain the trunk, but the other things, (clothes and books,) were forfeited to the government. I begged the favor of retaining a few trifling keepsakes, but all I could get was a brush, three religious books, and a wooden spoon. All my companions were treated in the same manner, and filched of every thing they possessed. I accused them of robbery; for even by their own *ministerial* reasoning, we could be regarded only as being *in transitu*, and consequently, had been merely lodged temporarily in their custody, awaiting an opportunity for transportation—therefore, whatever the *transporting authorities* chose to permit us to carry from home, they had no right to rob us of in a foreign land—no more than the governor of Cape town, where we might run in for refreshment, would possess over what we might carry thence with us. All the reply they made, was, that, they knew what they were doing, and would hear nothing from me.

We were, with the other prisoners, mustered on deck, with the left leg and foot bare, (the right having the irons on,) for the purpose of inspection, by the surgeon connected with the transport ship. All were

pronounced "hale and fit for the passage," until they came to me, when, from my debilitated appearance, the surgeons were induced to question me as to whether I felt able to undergo the fatigue of so long a voyage, or not? I replied that I was more fit to go than remain, for I felt it would be with but little regret that I should exchange that abode of vice for distant and untied scenes.

After replacing our shoes and stockings, we were placed on board a lighter, where were some sixty men from the Leviathan; and we were soon along side, the "Marquis of Hastings" lying anchored at Spithead, and already containing one hundred men, whom she had brought from Woolwich.

The muster roll was read as we passed over the ship's sides; and on going down to the lower deck, a bundle of bedding was handed to each, containing a wool mattress, two blankets, and a thin rug; all marked with the number, the individual held on the books. Berths were assigned to us, calculated to contain four men, into which we got, waiting further orders. After looking about the hold, the first questions I heard asked by those who came on board with me, were, "what do you get to eat?" and "what is the quality?" exhibiting the all-engrossing ideas of every one's mind. The answer so shocked me, that I was deterred from making any inquiry myself, determined to await patiently, the development of each new scene, without anticipating any. It would be nearly useless to enter minutely into occurrences of that voyage; in fact, it would be too voluminous, and I must be brief.

When the provision did arrive, (which was not until the next day,) we found that the breakfast consisted of nothing but the usual "skilly;" the dinner, alternately, of four ounces of very salt beef, and two ounces of plain pudding; or of three ounces of pork and a pint of pea soup; and supper of one pint of sweetened tea or cocoa—one sea biscuit having been issued in the morning to serve for the day's bread. The messes were of six men each, with only a "kid" to bring the food down in, one tin cup, one wooden spoon, and one knife and fork, as table furniture and eating apparatus for the six.

The ship was a large one, perhaps of 600 tons burthen, and the middle deck was fitted up with two tiers of berths on each side, from *abast* the mizzenmast to the extreme bow, with at least twenty hammocks swung in the intermediate space. The number of prisoners thus congregated in one mass, were two hundred and forty, and the utmost confusion and tumult continually prevailed among them, at all times, except during the silent watches of the night. They were separated into three distinct grand divisions, controlled by as many captains, assisted by a dozen constables, all subject to the surgeon superintendant. These *officers* were all selected from the worst characters the black book contained, all particularly marked by the qualifications so requisite in the government of such institutions, viz: an inordinate desire to obtain a superior's smile—consummate artfulness, with a designing, deceitful, and treacherous heart—a love of human misery, and a disposition to glory in the pain of others. Indeed, it is

astonishing how familiarity hardens the heart of man to human suffering, and steels it against all the strange and ghastly things of terrestrial existence; but ten times more astonishing is it, to find men who appear, without such terrible training, to feel a pleasure in the sight of sorrow, and derive a sort of agreeable excitement from witnessing the pangs and miseries of others. Such beings we must ever hate, and involuntarily shrink from their contact, with as much apprehension as from the sting of a scorpion. The consequence of being under the surveillance of such beings, were the horrid castigations with the inhuman *cat*, of some thirty or more during the voyage, in the manner, and with nearly the same effect, as that of poor Cavanaugh's, on board the hulk, and various other minor punishments, as solitary, double irons, deprivation of food, &c. &c.

On arriving on board the transport ship, 12th March, I lost no time in writing to London, requesting the attendance of Mr. Waller, who arrived on Friday, the 15th, seemingly under great excitement of feeling; yet, to calm our minds relative to this sudden transportation, he said he "expected it would be so, to ensure the safety of those whose cases were undergoing investigation." I had long imagined such was the feeling, and therefore made but little complaint myself, only anxious that some of our letters for America, still in their hands, might convey the intelligence to our friends; and that he would exert himself to restore our clothing. He left, promising to attend to our requests, and return on the Monday following, as the ship,

he was informed by the superintendent, would not sail until Tuesday. Of his promised aid, and the restoration of our clothing, books, &c. we were deprived, by the ship sailing on Sunday, the 17th March.

You, my dear sir, are, doubtless, as much surprised as we were, at so sudden a departure, for so distant a land, contrary to many assurances, made, no doubt, in deceit, for no other purpose than to cajole unfortunate beings into hopes, a depression of which must aggravate their misery an hundred fold. Thus ended all our trust in British clemency; and thus, in eager, anxious destitution, we commenced a voyage of 16,000 miles, to the Antipodes of our homes, in connexion with a mass of corruption and crime to which the world could scarce find a parallel.

Here were beings from almost every class in England—those born to wealth and honor, and those possessing the Queen's commissions not excepted. To the eye of the man of perception. it would have been curious and interesting to trace the aspect of those wretched men, the effects of their imprisonment and transportation, under the various circumstances, upon each character. And although every man plead "not guilty," to any charge of crime, yet it was easy to discover what had been the misdemeanor of either, by their manner, and by their private stories for entertainment, during the fore part of the night. There you could hear the tale of the light debauchee, who had received his doom for some criminal intrigue—of the highway robber's hair-breadth escapes—the burglar's artful triumphs over stone walls and iron bound

chests—the cunningly devised, and skilfully executed plots of the sly pickpocket—the wily gamester, *sans* principle, *sans* feeling, *sans* every thing but a love for crime and iniquity—the bold, daring, brutal criminal, hardened in offences, and impudent in crime—the man of deep feeling, bowed down by a sense of evil and shame—the dull, heavy man of guilt and despair, who could tell of many years imprisonment and exclusion from social intercourse; with the “light of hope gone out in his eye,” and nothing left but tenacity of life and capability of endurance—and of the youth, who, in a passionate excitement, had sought to poison himself and betrothed, fatal with the latter, because parental authority interposed obstacles to the ill assorted union. Thousands are the anecdotes that I could relate concerning that ship’s cargo. I will not, however, detain you with them; but proceed with relations of more of the horrors of the passage. On the embarkation the weather was cold, but as we approached the equator, it gradually became more and more warm, until intense heat rendered our situation not only inconvenient, but shockingly uncomfortable. The hospital incumbents were daily increasing, until the salt waves closed over thirty unhappy victims of cruelty and starvation. Vermin, the most loathed of all objects to an American, generated too, in such abundance, that our beds and clothing became literally alive with them. My dreams were always about them, and I would often awake in the act of killing them. They remained with us during the voyage—they landed with, and still separated not from us, until we were as-

signed in the country, where it was extremely difficult to get rid of them. Oh, my dear sir, you cannot conceive the slightest approach to the torment we endured while subject to these ruthless invaders of human comfort—those *implements* of exclusively British torture.

You will say this picture is disgusting; but if the relation is revolting to the mind, what sensations must have been engendered by a participation in the reality? Ah, many nights did I spend, without sleep or rest, while my ever busy mind would roam over the wide world without motive, and assume a tone but little short of distraction—when every noise was hushed save the lashing of the waves against the ship's sides, the creaking of the helm, the occasional tread of the crew on deck, or the heavy breathings of the human beings about me, has my heart experienced every vicissitude of human misery and passion—sorrow and grief, gloom and despondency, anger and the extreme of despair endured to an extent seldom felt by man.

The crysipelas or scurvy broke out among us, and continued to carry off the poor fellows, long after we had landed; so that one year from the date of our arrival, out of the two hundred and forty persons, the Marquis of Hastings was frieghted with, only *one hundred and three* were alive; owing, as declared by the skilful surgeon of the Colonial hospital at Hobarttown, to nothing but ill treatment—short and bad rations.

From Spithead we had a very fair wind, until we entered the Bay of Biscay, when we were driven back to the coast of Ireland; yet we soon regained our course,

and sailed gently on in sight of the Azores, the De Verds and the majestic Teneriffè. Again high winds drove us out of the general track to the American coast, when, after two or three days spent in fruitless attempts to continue around Cape Horn, the course was changed, and we bore away for the cape of Good Hope, off which we found high winds, rough seas, and foggy weather; where, in a night squall, we lost our jib-booms, and dropped the foreyard, both of which were soon replaced, and we passed on safely, although many fears were entertained for the old rickety craft. Notwithstanding many high gales, she proved a safe conveyance to us; yet her passage homeward was not so fortunate, for she was lost off the coast of China. We passed very near St. Paul's island, a small, barren rock, standing one hundred feet or more out of the sea, with no anchorage about it. In certain seasons, a kind of fish is caught in abundance there, very little inferior to our northern salmon. It lies about fifteen hundred miles from Hobarttown, a distance we run in fifteen days.

Embarked on the wide ocean for a long and tedious voyage, I had full leisure for thought; and though amid the tumult of hundreds of beings, scarce human, I suffered it not to disturb me. I felt not of their species, and gave no ear to their confusion. I stood in the midst of a sink of iniquity, and every shade of crime, from the deepest to the lightest die. Surely if there are places in human abodes deserving the title of Hell, one is a transport ship, crowded with felons, culled from England's most abandoned criminals. Statistics

show that the number of committals in one year, was eighteen thousand and eighty-three—one thousand three hundred and ninety-seven of whom received the sentence of death. From this eighteen thousand, select a few hundred of the worst, cast them together without moral restriction, and you have a school of vice that cannot fail to instruct the novice in a more elevated course of *artful* crime. Pickpockets formed no small share of the cargo, and they are truly the most expert and deceptive beings I ever met; they would take from under my very eye, the food I was eating, without my discovering the thief.

I steeled my heart against the contaminating influence of all these vices, by pondering, with intensity, upon the past and the future. I chose that course, although it rendered the mind dark and moody, and in unison with the sad objects presented to it, because it shut out the evil associations of the present; though it produced the bitterest blight in nature, a despondency that became awfully convincing of the instability of human enjoyments, the vanity of human pursuits, and the mutability of earthly hopes. The future exhibited a path of sorrow, suffering and danger; a life of toil and slavery, and a bed of thorns; while a review of the past pierced my soul with a thousand agonies. My early hopes; the gay dreams of youth, and the associations of riper years, were blasted—gone—circumstances loudly exclaimed, for ever!! I saw my poor family, feeble, and destitute, and lonely, and in grief. I raised in my heart a picture that, though creating anguish, I hugged to my soul, and would not have parted with

for all the honors and fortunes of the world. I sought for no oblivious antidote, but closely embraced the malady that produced abstraction, rather than partake of the scenes acting around me. But obloquy, severity, and indignity, religion alone gave me strength to endure with proper equanimity, and blunted many a pang, dark, deep, and bitter.

About four weeks previous to arrival, poor J. J. McNulty became very low, by the decline commenced on the passage from Quebec, and greatly augmented by the harsh treatment, bad diet, and filthiness subjected to since. He lingered on until we cast anchor, when he was sent immediately to the Colonial hospital, where he died four hours after arrival, exhibiting a powerful faith and a perfect assurance of eternal happiness. I also showed symptoms of the erysipelas, a disease prevalent on board, every case of which had, as yet, terminated fatally. The swelling of my head, face, and limbs was discovered by the surgeon, who ordered me to the ship hospital, when, by my request, he took a large quantity of blood, and I returned to my berth; the same night I bled also very freely at the nose. The bleeding was effective in reducing the malady, but an inflammation commenced in my arm that soon spread itself over my right side. By inquiry, it was discovered that the lancet, with which the incision had been made, was the same used, a few hours before, in opening a putrid swelling on the knee of a poor fellow, who died in a few minutes afterward. The fault was not the surgeon's, but the attendant's, who was culpable for not cleaning the instrument. It

was attributed to carelessness, but I imagined it was wilfulness, as he had openly professed an extreme unkindness to all my countrymen. He soon fell a victim to the same disease that his heedless conduct had infused into my veins. The flesh of my right side assumed a livid hue, and gradually grew darker. The pain was excruciating, and appeared to proceed from the distention of the veins, which seemed to be filled with balls, continually rolling toward my extremities. The surgeon was hopeless, and spoke of amputation; but, providentially, we arrived at that critical moment, and I was sent on shore to a hospital, where I remained eight weeks under the hands of a skilful and kind surgeon, who happily reestablished my health. The day before we entered the harbor, Alexander McLeod showed violent evidences of a quick consumption, and was also carried to the hospital. He enjoyed a lucid interval of only five minutes, and died in forty-eight hours after landing. When lucid he recognised me, and spoke of his friends, to whom he wished to be remembered. As his pain returned he called on "Mary," and, with a violent struggle, his spirit burst from its clay tenement, to try the realities of another world.

Many others from the ship were sent immediately on shore, and some twelve, or more died in the first week. The anxiety to hasten the landing, will be explained by the fact, that the surgeon superintendent got five guineas for each prisoner he discharged alive, although they might die the moment after; and for all who expired on ship board, he received nothing at all:

consequently those consigned to the sea were a "dead loss" to him.

I was, as I have before said, in the same ward where poor McLeod died; and though scarce able to move, I saw every scene that followed, which I would fain pass over unrelated, for fear of wounding the feelings of his dear relatives; but satisfied that they are reasonable and reflective beings, and would regard outrage upon a dead body, as in no wise affecting the peace of the soul, yet as the strongest indications of an enormously hardened depravity, and a total want of sensibility in the perpetrators. He was taken, as he expired, stripped naked, put in the "man box," and carried to the dead house, and there stretched upon a table. Five days afterward a body of prisoners, who had come in the Marquis of Hastings, were sent to the hospital to carry away and bury the dead. They arrived and found the body on a table in the ward cut in many pieces, with its entrails lying beside it. They gathered the pieces together and put them in a coffin of rough boards, and behold it was poor McLeod, whom they all knew, and respected. The scene was revolting, but there was no alternative; they carried him away, and laid him in a "strangers grave," without ceremony, or one mark to distinguish the spot from the thousands of "felon mounds" around him. Alas, poor man! he thus went early to his "narrow bed," without one friendly hand to smooth the thorny pillow of death, or wipe the cold dampness from his pallid brow. Without a kind sympathising eye to watch his movements and anticipate his wants. No cheering

voice to calm his mind, and point him to the efficacious blood of a Saviour, save him who lay beside him in an agony of pain, on the verge of the grave himself; and whose mind was filled with his own griefs. Yet I wept the fate of the poor, noble, persecuted fellow, whom I had, since adversity had cast us together, regarded as a brother, and, when I witnessed the expiring struggle of his brave spirit, and saw its clay tenement deserted, I felt a burning, withering, desolation, and thought my spirit must accompany his from this world of care and sorrow. My uneasiness and pain gave so much trouble to the wardsman, (a convict,) that he administered a quieting opiate, which threw me into a profound sleep, and from which I did not awake until late the next day, just as the surgeon was, with his dozen attendents, taking his morning round. He enquired for poor McLeod; and on being informed of his removal to number fourteen, (dead house,) he said, "I feared it! I wish to heaven I could have saved him; but he came too late for our skill. I never saw as perfect a model of a man as his; and I am sorry to say that I candidly believe him to have fallen a victim to the barbarity of the surgeon of the ship, who ought to be placed in the same situation that a dozen of his men are already in, since landing. If they continue to send them here as fast as they have done lately, all local patients must be excluded." It was, indeed, thus; for in one week from our arrival, all the beds in the building were occupied, and many were on the floor, notwithstanding its ability to contain some two or three hundred persons. When he approached my bed, he

said, "And are you too one of the Marquis of Hastings' men?" I replied that I was, and a contryman of the last dead. "What, an American! Indeed I pity you poor men, who are sent here to suffer the horrors of transportation, and be subject to the contaminating influence of the greatest depravity the world ever knew, for what ought not to be considered a crime against God. What ails you?" I exhibited my arm, and told the cause. "What, a foul lancet? In England the fellow would be indicted for mal-practice. You have, however, come in time; I can save you; but, I dare say, he would have either amputated your arm, or have cast you overboard, if the ship had been out three days longer." He ended with giving orders for certain applications, and placing me on "full diet," with extra wine tea and sugar. So, while I remained in that place, I had enough of the best provisions.

A few days after the whole were landed, Mr. Chandler was sent there also; and in ten days, was returned to the barracks. Van Camp likewise came, having been sent out to assist in drawing a cart load of wood from a hill, some two miles distant; in doing which, he was ruptured, and otherwise injured. He, too, died in three weeks after landing. Thus, then, there are but six remaining of the nine Americans, and two of whom were sometime in jeopardy.

But, then, I must conclude; and you can not expect more than one or two letters more upon the subject of our treatment, when I will continue with a description of this country, which is indeed worthy a more prolific pen and ability, and a more fertile imagination than I

possess; for more magnificent scenery, and grandeur of prospect, if mountains on mountains, reared to the clouds, with their concomitant, awful precipices, ravines, and forests can be called so.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XVI.

ASHGROVE, near Oatlands, V. D. L.

August, 1841.

To ———,

My Dear Sir: I must now go back to the landing, which I did not myself witness, but gathered all the information I could desire from others. The harbor is a very capacious one, and the ship anchored some half mile from the docks where she was visited by the Governor, the Secretary, the Chief, and other Police magistrates—the principal Superintendent, the District Constable, and a whole posse of clerks, with huge folios under their arms—constables with their rattles in hand, numbering at least half as many as were on board. Before the officers the prisoners were each arraigned, questioned, and examined in the manner I have before related as taking place on the hulk.

It is strange, indeed, when the prisoners knew every mark they might have on their persons would tend directly to identify them in case of absconding, (and but few ever performed the passage without having formed some plan of that kind,) that they would, while

on ship board, make it their chief amusement to imprint, indelibly, upon every part of their bodies, letters, words, flowers, and a thousand fanciful figures, every one of which was carefully noted in the "descriptive folios." I fancy it would be a great treat to see published, leaves from this and the "character book." To read the whole of the latter, would require more than an age; for the slightest as well as the grossest characteristics of every male or female prisoner ever sent here, are minutely recorded.

The prisoners were all landed *en masse*, and marched to the "*Tench*," (prison barracks,) and there ranked in the form of a half moon; then addressed by the Governor, Capt. Sir John Franklin, after having been formally delivered by G. Jeffries, R. N., Surgeon of the ship, to the Superintendent of convicts, W. Gunn, Esq. The address was a "puffing" one, and very appropriate. Sir J. told them that he had full evidences of all their former conduct, and pointed out the course they must pursue to wipe off the stains and disgraces of their characters—that it was their fault, that they were reduced to the present degradation—that they must submit to the laws and regulations adopted for their governance, on pain of exemplary punishment—that these had been rendered more illiberal and severe than formerly, at present, by the extreme depravity of their class—that they would be narrowly watched, and the minutest misdemeanor punished, otherwise they would still remain vicious and corrupt. He warned them of the different degrees of punishments adopted to curb and reclaim the

refractory. He descanted upon the benefits of "assignment," with "*glowing eloquence*," and said, "you must submit to the legal control of your masters; for when put in their custody we hold them accountable for your conduct; and if you pass with good conduct your probationary periods,* you will be entitled to the indulgence of a ticket of leave, with which you may choose your own masters and employment, and receive wages; but still subject to restrictions and surveillance; and close upon its heels comes the emancipation, with its *high privileges* of citizenship, and, at last, the *free pardon* from Her Majesty, *God bless her*. These are favors of great import, and worth aiming at; but they cannot be obtained without good conduct." This speech was a set one, and occupied some time, being delivered with a hesitancy painful in the last degree, to the listener. When it was concluded the men were all dismissed, but the Americans, who had been arranged by themselves. To them he then turned, with high invectives, for "offences against God, and all the ties of social government—for treason, a crime the foremost in all the *British code*." He congratulated them upon their escape from "retributive justice," and said, "some of you, while in England, rendered yourselves quite notorious, for writing disrespectfully of the authorities under whose control you were placed, and even of the government. I will have you understand that you are in a *penal Colony* now, where public sympathy will be no advantage to you, and

*Eight years slavery for a "lifer"—seven for fourteen years—five for seven, and other sentences in proportion.

where all the inhabitants will deem it their duty to keep the strictest watch over you—where, for a slight censure of the government, your punishment will be severe. You come with a character for sobriety, morality, and even piety, seldom found here; but all this will avail you nothing, unless you practise the same. I would, therefore, recommend you to abstain from a connection with the other class of prisoners, whose *forte* is unbounded criminality. I can not tell what will be your situation here, for you are sent without especial orders, and we are undetermined yet; however, whatever it may be, I hope you will invariably maintain such conduct as to confirm our present good opinion of your *private* characters.”

By the advice given in the latter part of his excellency's speech, my countrymen supposed they were to be separated from the felon gang; and they rejoiced in the hope, for they did not comprehend the possibility of otherwise keeping themselves distinct. But they were miserably undeceived at night fall, when they were indiscriminately mustered with the *horde* into various wards, in alphabetical order—each containing from forty to sixty persons.

It was some weeks before they concluded to *grant* the Americans the privilege of assignment; and, in the mean time, the Superintendent, a shrewd, penetrating person, told them that he had not the right of putting them at work; he would, therefore, leave it optional with them to labor or not; yet he would advise them, *as a friend*, to go out with the gangs, as the work would be light, and the free air would con-

tribute more to their health than remaining shut in the yard. They thought so too, and were rather anxious to see the town, therefore went out, expecting, as it was discretionary, that they could remain in at any time; but here they "reasoned without their host," for when *once enlisted, nothing but sickness could exempt them from labor.* The work was quarrying, breaking, and wheeling stone for McAdamizing the streets of Hobarttown. It was not easy employment, but still they found more bitterness attending a "proper submission" to the tormenting annoyances of the convict overseers, who took pleasure in vexing them, for the purpose, most probably, of getting an opportunity of complaint, on account of the distinctive features of their class. Of these, however, after three or four weeks, Waggoner, Vernon, Mallery, and Cooley were relieved, by an assignment to different settlers in the country, leaving Mr. Chandler, who had returned from the hospital, and been made ward's-man, and myself, who still remained there.

I do not know but that I ought to regard the fatality which sent me to the hospital, as a providential circumstance, inasmuch as I there obtained much information that, no doubt, was a great assistance in averting blows often designed for me, by those beings whom I afterward was forced into contact with. Many of the occupants of the hospital were "old hands," (men who had been long in the Colony,) and they sought to induct me into the mysteries that bound together the various classes of prisoners throughout the Colony, that I might, as they termed it, become a

“chum” for “old hands,” before my time; I was uncommonly tractable, and made acquaintance with many of the general vicious and criminal courses, without “taking the usual degrees.” I learned the method they resorted to, to raise the ready for “lush,” (drink,) and to evade discovery—how they made up the deficiencies of provision, caused by the penury of their masters, by “weeding” them—while the company took turns in conveying the booty to a general receptacle, and the proceeds were thrown into a public purse—subject only to public wants, or the necessities of a “gala” time, such as Christmas, the day following, (boxing day,) and St. Patrick’s—“holy days” for prisoners, regulated by law. This “weeding” is a practice adopted by the assigned servants of each farm, who steal from their masters, in small quantities, whatever they can dispose of, and “plant” (hide) it, until a sufficient quantity is collected to make up a “swag” (load) for market, when it is sent by the master’s *trusty* man, who is always in the secret, to a “cove,” (receiver,) who pays some thirty per cent. of its value in “*shiners, yellow boys, or punt rags;*” and another thirty per cent. in rum, or “half-and-half” (ale and porter mixed.) These removes are always made “under the rose,” (in secret,) principally when the “bloke” (proprietor) is out. But I hardly saw how such things could be effected, when the country swarmed with constables. “Oh! that was easy enough, as it was a good part of the *trap’s* living, for a *crown* would make that all right; and none were *hauled up,* but such as wouldn’t *fork over;* and the *cove,* when he

discovers any *down* (suspicion) resting upon himself, always makes complaint of having some property *lifted*, and applies for a resident *trap*, who takes the *down* off the place, and all again is *whist*. And, then, when the party has a *down* upon either *pal's* (mate) *coming it*, (informing against them,) the *trickster* (a false swearer) makes oath, and the *peacher* gets the triangle, (place where a man is tied for a flogging,) solitary, six months on the roads, a chain gang, or, perchance, Port Arthur." These instructions I found of great service to me afterward, for every farm contains such a clique—not that I wished to avail myself of a connexion—but that it enabled me to fathom many of the schemes formed against me, and re-possess myself of such property as had been stolen from what was under my care, and for which I was accountable.

From the hospital I wrote to England, and gave the letters to an officer of a British ship, who had been confined by the scurvey. I also gave a note, written on the fly leaf of a testament, addressed to Mr. McKenzie, to an American seaman, who was also an inmate for several weeks. From the first of these, and some other letters, I have received replies already.

After two months residence I left the Colonial hospital, and proceeded, with a pass, to the prisoner's barracks, where my *ticket* obtained me immediate entrance, and I was directed to Mr. Chandler's ward; into which, at twilight, when the outside laborers had come in and supped, were mustered, by Mr. Gunn, sixty men, some of whom were the worst beings man ever beheld. I must pass over this building without des-

cription, and only say that it contained some fourteen hundred men, all of whom eat in one room, and then leave you to form your own conception of the manner in which we spent our time in such a bedlam. Constables promenaded the yard and kept the gate, to prevent any thing passing contrary to order. The superintendent's house, and the chapel for the prisoners, fronted the yard, the latter of which had, underneath, a vast number of dark, low, dismal, damp, floorless cells for solitary punishment. A treadmill also belonged to the barracks, upon which some twenty or thirty men were continually "treading" out all the flour of rice, barley, and wheat, that the prisoners consumed and where they slept during their condign sentence. In the yard too, as if to blast the sight of every inmate, stood the inhuman *triangle*, upon which from five to twenty individuals invariably received, each morning, some dozens of lashes *on* the bare back or posteriors.

The provisions were but a trifle better than received at the hulk; and our beds consisted of one mattress and two blankets, almost black with fleas, and alive with lice; while every crevice of the *box* berth, and the wall, was wedged full of bugs. With such companions who could sleep? I could not! so had recourse to narcotics, supplied by the visiting surgeon. I refrain from comment, and permit you to form your worst conceptions of misery, and then say, *you are far short of the real state in which I spent two weeks*; during which time, however, I never was put at work, but kindly permitted to walk out into the town occasionally, and have several interviews with the principal superintendent, Mr.

Gunn, a man standing six feet three, and weighing nine and a half score, with a rough, dare-devil look, and a piercing eye; he is wonderfully shrewd, and when having once seen a man, he ever after knows him. He had but one arm, having had the right shot off by bush-rangers, whom, as a Lieutenant, he was, with his company, in pursuit of; this misfortune recommended him to the government, in whose estimation he now stands high, though not at present enjoying the principal superintendency, yet several other offices of emolument and trust.

On the 11th October Mr. Chandler was assigned as a carpenter, to Commissary General Roberts, who also wanted me as a clerk and storekeeper. He had a great difficulty to surmount in obtaining two Americans, as it had been ordered "by the Gov. in council, that none of them should be allowed to remain in a seaport, or two to go to one master." However, by threatening to resign, he gained his point; and therefore, Mr. Chandler and myself were happy in being sent together to his farm, fifty miles from Hobarttown and seven from Oatlands. The name of the establishment is Ashgrove, and contains six thousand acres of land, on which are some of the most beautiful mountains, sugarloaves, and other scenes, that you can possibly fancy. My duty is to collect, issue, and account for, all provision and clothing wanted by twenty men employed on the place—to keep a minute diary of occurrences—to muster the two thousand sheep, quarterly, with the two hundred cattle, and several horses; at the same time to furnish a most particular descrip-

tion of them—naming every spot and mark and brand—to keep secure, under lock and key, and account for every particle of wool, produce, &c. raised on or coming to the farm—and render a weekly schedule to Mr. R. Then add to this, the duty of a teacher of five children, which has been a part of my vocation for the last six months, and the multiplicity of cares would seem to exclude the possibility of my writing these letters. Indeed I have found it extremely difficult, for almost every moment of my time has its engagement, from four in the morning until eleven at night; but having commenced, it appears now the only amusement I have, saving the monthly letters for my faithful wife, who last addressed me from Canada, whither she has returned, and is continuing her strenuous exertions to effect my complete emancipation. The following is the result of her conduct, of which she had informed me some weeks before I received it.

“Principal Superintendent’s Office,

“3d August, 1841.

“MEMORANDUM.

“In reply to your application for a Ticket of Leave, I have to acquaint you, that his Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, has been pleased to approve of your receiving such Indulgence. You will, therefore, report yourself to the Police Magistrate of the District in which you reside, who will take your description, and forward the same to the Muster Master’s Office, where the necessary documents will be prepared for you.

“J. SPODE,

Principal Sup’t.

“ON PUBLIC SERVICE ONLY.

“To Benjamin Wait,

“ ‘Marquis Hastings,’

“F. Roberts, Esq.,

“Oatlands.”

This indulgence gives me the permission of laboring for wages, and selecting my own employer and labor; but does not emancipate me from the arbitrary "Prison Code," or "Summary Punishments." Yet in its enjoyment, I hope to be successful in laying by some funds to assist me to return, in some future day, to my home and friends, if not by permission, on *French leave*. It was procured not only for myself, but also for all the Americans here, who are to enjoy it after two year's servitude, in the capacity of a slave, instead of eight years, which is the usual course. We are indebted to the patriotic conduct and entreaties of my beloved wife, for this slight dawn of liberty. God bless her, and may she succeed in her most ardent wish, according to her heart's desire, is the united prayer of all her countrymen in this ocean bound jail.

I will only add, that my *historical* correspondence is pretty nearly closed, and subscribe myself,

My dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

[I have considered it proper, at this part, to break off my personal narrative, and insert Mrs. Wait's letters, which follow; then, at their termination, resume, for the purpose only, of giving a brief account of the country, and a few incidents occurring there.]

LETTER XVII.

NEW-YORK, August 23d, 1839.

To — — —,

My Dear Friend: Amid the noise and bustle of this grand commercial, and beautifully located city, I sit down to redeem the pledge I gave when I last wrote, by informing you of my safe arrival here, and the success which has thus far so favorably attended me on my mission. I remained in Lockport, where I was the grateful recipient of all the kindness that Christian sympathy could bestow, until May last, when two letters reached me from Mr. Wait, one dated 5th Feb'y, on board the York hulk, a prison ship, where he had been placed, in common with the most vitiated of England's degraded felons, and suffered every indignity and hardship from the cruelty of his oppressors. This letter informed me that there was a prospect of some of the Canadians being released in London, whither they had been taken by writs of habeas corpus, to undergo an examination before the Queen's Bench, on the ground of illegal proceedings relative to their transportation, but that there was little chance of any thing being done to effect *his* liberation, although he had been encouraged to hope for a return to America, which was but a delusion too soon to be dispelled; as the next letter, dated 15th March, announced the heart-rending intelligence, that he had, without a moments warning, been ironed and sent, with eight other Canadians, on board the transport ship, "Marquis of Hastings," then lying at Spit Head, ready to sail for

Van Dieman's Land. Although I was, for a time, overpowered by this astounding reality, as well as the affecting adieus breathed in his letter, it aroused me again to action.

I left Lockport immediately, to return to Canada, intending to procure certificates of character, and every thing that might bear favorably on my poor husband's case; confidently trusting that I should yet be enabled to carry them to England, which hope seemed hourly strengthened from the moment of my starting; for I found, on the canal boat that conveyed me to Buffalo, a warm-hearted family of reformers, by the name of Wynan, from St. Thomas, in Canada, who had been visiting their friends in the Eastern states. In conversing with them on the state of our country, the sufferings entailed upon the participants in the rebellion, I showed them Mr. Wait's letters, and informed them of my intentions, if permitted to carry them into effect; though it would evidently be attended with difficulty, on account of pecuniary embarrassment; as my family had been dispersed, and nearly every thing available from the wreck of property I once might have commanded, had already been expended in my exertions; and that, did I not go farther, it would be owing alone to these circumstances, as I had then set out to make the effort. This excited quite an interest, there being a number of patriotic spirits on board, who with young Mr. Wynan at their head, held a council instantane, and resolved that an effort should be made at least in that company, to aid me in prosecuting my plans in behalf of the captives; and well indeed did those

generous persons suit the action to the spirit, for in less than two hours, Mr. Wynan entered the cabin and handed me a copy of the above resolution, with a request that I would accept the enclosed thirty dollars, as an earnest of their sincere wishes for my success; hoping it might give the subject an impetus it would not lose until the object was finally accomplished, for which my most heart-felt thanks were offered; and my being thus far on my journey to-day, is conclusive evidence that their kind wishes have not as yet been disappointed; and I still trust, that the sequel will prove it to have been an indication indeed of the approval and protection of Providence, as well as the precursor of a happy result.

The kindness of this generous family offered a seat in their carriage which I gladly accepted as they would pass the door of my friends, where I wished to stop; and at which place they left me, proceeding on their way, after the proffer of their kindest wishes for my ultimate happiness, and a return of the grateful adieus of myself and friends.

Here I left my dear child, and commenced operations by collecting, among my husband's acquaintances, certificates of his former good character. I went to Haldimand, where we had last resided, and obtained a great number of most respectable testimonials, which were ratified by the signature of Wm. H. Merritt, Esq., the worthy and distinguished member of Parliament for that constituency, who seemed not a little astonished that I should have conceived the idea of going to England, considering the circumstances in which I was

placed, though he readily and most kindly gave me letters of introduction and recommendation to official characters in England, with one to Richard Irvin, Esq., of this city, containing, as I afterwards learned to my advantage, a check on that gentleman for twenty dollars, which was most gratefully accepted, and will, with Mr. Merritt's corresponding kindnesses, be remembered with that deep sense of gratitude so eminently due. I was extremely fortunate in procuring the necessary testimony from the most respectable, wherever I applied, throughout the Niagara district, and was much encouraged by the kindness shown, and the fervent wishes breathed for my success in the arduous undertaking; and not until I had finally obtained the requisite documents, did I realize that I must bid adieu to my friends, perhaps for the last time. And my dear child! I had no means of taking her with me—could I do so, I might be prevented by sickness, on the voyage, from giving her the requisite care and attention; and should it even be otherwise, I could not attend to the many duties of my mission with an infant in my arms. Yet the thought of leaving her I could scarcely tolerate, for a moment; and should I not succeed in England, and eventually join my husband in his land of exile, my heart must still yearn for my absent child. Could you but imagine, my dear friend, the heart-sickening effect of these sad reflections, you would attribute, as I must ever do, alone to Divine power, the strength that enabled me to decide in this matter of vital moment. I made it a subject of prayer to God by day, and in the vigil of the midnight hour

continued my supplications for guidance and direction. I would press my dear babe to my breast, and lay it, as it were, on the altar of mercy, with an ardent desire for resignation to the divine will, was it but in mercy made known to me. Thus nearly a week of dreadful anxiety passed, while I continued my preparations, not only for my own journey, but, also, for the child should I conclude to take her. I had made arrangements to leave Canada, and go to Buffalo, agreeably to the invitation of a friend, on Wednesday, the fifth of July; the Sabbath previous being the last I could expect to enjoy with my friends in Canada; still I was undecided about my child, though every maternal affection seemed to entwine around my heart with inextricable tenacity; this too was a sleepless and intensely anxious night. Again I submitted the case to Him who is exalted in accepting the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, and prayed with a fervor that I had scarce ever before experienced, when a calm and consoling resignation was diffused through the soul, and I felt that the conflict was past,—I could then leave her without an additional struggle, confident that He to whose care I had been enabled to commit her, would be to her more than a mother.

I had taken leave of my elder brothers; the youngest now came to bid me adieu, 'ere I left, and by whom the generous philanthropists of Dunnville sent a substantial demonstration of their kind feeling, which, with all similar manifestations, was most thankfully received. On Wednesday morning I was ready to cross the Niagara. I took my dear babe in my arms.

to give a parting embrace, who, perceiving a tear stealing down my cheek, took her little apron and wiped it away, endeavoring thus to console "*poor ma,*" which she could but imperfectly articulate, by her endearing caresses; little knowing, poor dear, the cause of her mother's sorrow; and I thanked heaven that she was shielded, by her innocent childhood, from even a momentary pang on the occasion. I went to Buffalo, accompanied by a respectable lady of your acquaintance, Mrs. Field, who kindly introduced me to her friends, to whom I feel much indebted for subsequent introductions to generous and sympathising persons, who did much to aid me, especially to the Rev. Mr. Choules, who gave me letters of importance to England, which, I doubt not, should I reach that country, will be very serviceable to me. I took the canal at Tonawanda, where my aged father, who is a refugee from his home, waited to bid me farewell; but I will pass over the struggle which elicited a "God bless you, my child," while scalding tears coursed their channels down his "grief-worn cheek," and spoke too plainly of desolation and wo. These painful partings being past, my mind dwelt, in the ardency of hope, on the object of my mission. I spent a little time with my kind friends in Lockport, then proceeded to Rochester, where I visited Mrs. John G. Parker, who, while I was there, of the happy release of her husband, with eight others, in London. I had mourned with Mrs. P., and I most heartily rejoiced with her, in the cheering prospect of his restoration to herself and her dear, interesting family.

It was considered by some with whom I conversed here, that this indulgence of the British government to a part of the American prisoners, augured a speedy release of the whole; and that it would be superfluous for me to go to England and intercede for those who had gone to their land of captivity, as the government would, doubtless, restore them ere long: if otherwise, my efforts could avail little at Downing street, as I would be but a female in a strange land, whose applications would likely be passed unnoticed by the authorities. The latter, I thought, might be possible; yet I felt bold to make the attempt, and abide the result; but to the former suggestion, of the unsought liberality of the government to the unfortunate prisoners in V. D. L., I could give no credence. Had I been disposed to do so, the severe, rigorous course pursued toward them, of which Mr. Wait's letters informed me, would alone undeceive me on that point; though, I must say, I felt somewhat encouraged by the fact that even a portion had been emancipated from thralldom; and, if possible, felt more anxiety to pursue my journey, and endeavor to effect the same for others.

Accompanied by his lady, I visited Mr. McKenzie, whom I had, for years, looked upon as the faithful champion of Canadian rights; and felt not a little indignant, when ushered into his grated prison-house, at seeing him incarcerated, in a land of freedom, for what, indeed appeared to me, a *marvellous offence*, as I had looked upon his conduct as merely an acquiescence in the border plans, that originated in sympathy. I could not but indulge in feelings of reproach toward

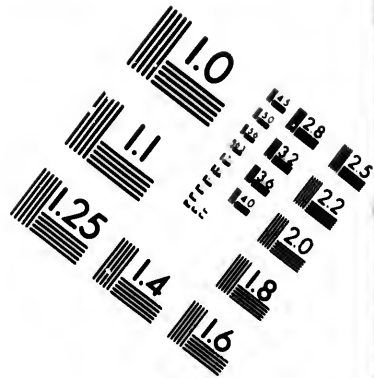
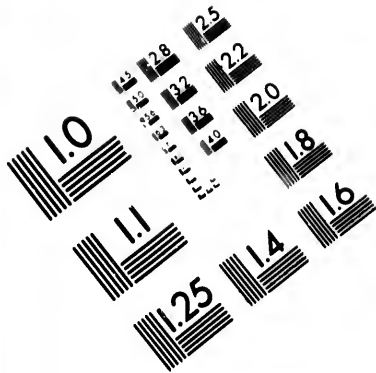
the American, who could, in an official document, declare, that the "*sympathising Yankees*," were nothing but the "*scum of American society*;" and advise that power which tramples relentlessly on the rights of its subjects, "to deal with them as might be deemed most proper to sustain the Royal authority in the Canadas." But I beg you will pardon this digression, as I am a Canadian, and must feel most deeply on the subject. Mr. M. gave me a warm greeting, and smiling at the novelty of his situation, kindly gave me his counsel, with letters to distinguished characters in England, wishing me "God speed," though he said I would be "but a drop from the clouds, in London."

The Rev. Mr. E. Tucker kindly took me to the packet, and handed me a letter from my very kind friend, Mr. Van Tine, of Buffalo, enclosing an additional sum to that already received from the good citizens. Mr. T. also gave me a letter to Mr. Garrow, U. S. Marshal, residing at Auburn, whither I proceeded, by stage, from Montezuma, and met a hearty welcome in the family of my excellent friend, the Rev. Mr. Johnston, recently from Canada, who had taken a deep interest in Mr. Wait's case, while there. He kindly and most energetically exerted his influence for me, which produced a good feeling, resulting much to my benefit. I was also most kindly received by Mr. Garrow and family; and, indeed, treated with generous attention by the liberal people—the patriotic Mr. Stowe, with other gentlemen, taking a deep interest.

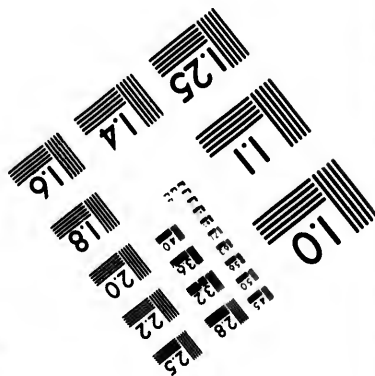
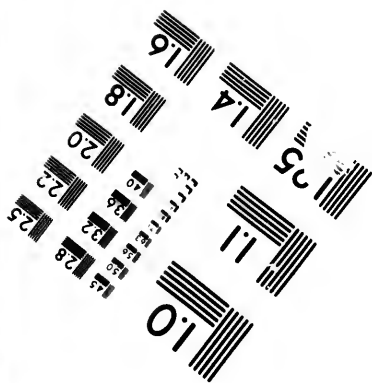
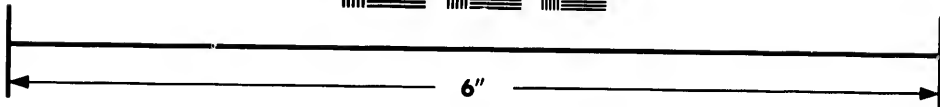
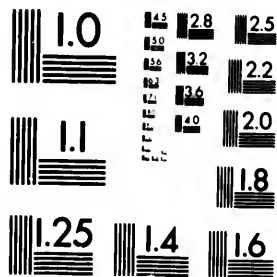
I left Auburn amid the blessings and prayers of my friends for success, travelling per rail road, which is a grand piece of work through mountains, across ravines, on the verge of precipices, and at length, through the celebrated salt works, reached Syracuse, where I met some kind friends. I visited the little village of Salina, and saw the mourning widows Woodruff and Buckley, whose unfortunate husbands were sacrificed at Kingston, by the hand of despotism. They are both interesting women. I shed the tear of sympathy with them, and could do no more but pray that the friend of the widow would grant them the rich consolation of his holy spirit.

I was again on the rail way, passing through a low, marshy country, also through a tunnel under the Erie canal, and thence to the fine city of Utica, where I was much assisted by the sensation aroused by a Mr. Hubbel, Mr. Bennet, and other benevolent gentlemen in my behalf. From thence I came on a beautiful line of rail road, on the banks of the Mohawk, the water of which is very dark, and had a view of the Little Falls, which are, indeed, the fac simile of what their name indicates, as they appeared to me but trifling cascades, though the scenery is very rugged, the country romantic and picturesque. I spent a few days at Canajoharie, with my sister, Mrs. Simpson, at which place there was much sympathy manifested by the generous inhabitants, who kindly proffered their aid in the enterprise. I was delighted with the richness and beauty of the country through which I passed from this to Albany, being drawn up an inclined plane





**IMAGE EVALUATION
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at Schenectady, by the force of loaded cars running down on another track, which was rather a novelty to me, and the danger of which I could not but fancy, though I believe accidents seldom occur at that place. At Albany I met with the utmost kindness from the philanthropic Friend Humphrey, who elicited much sympathy, and obtained some letters of introduction for England. I would now fain give you an idea of the gorgeous beauty displayed to the traveller, in descending the noble Hudson to New York; but the scenery beggars the descriptive power of my pen. A few beautiful islets lie dotted about in the stream with fancy observatories, while on either side are flourishing towns and villages, rich farms and shady groves, fine shrubbery, and towering mountains in the distance, with white cottages and pavilions on their summits, having a most charming effect on the beholder. West Point, in my estimation, far surpasses any scene on the route for natural beauty. I had but a distant view of the garrison, for which I was sorry; and saw, on the opposite side, the Sing Sing prison, that appeared a rather low building, standing, by no means, on a commanding site. Some distance below West Point, as if to rival the native magnificence of it, appeared the palisades, which presented a high, perpendicular, and majestic front, continuing for some miles, bearing the semblance of marble columns, closely put together, with architectural nicety. It is, indeed, most grand. There were, perhaps, one hundred and fifty sail on the river, running up with a fine breeze; and I could not but reflect on the different aspect presented here,

from that on the other side of the great Niagara; many parts of which, in point of natural grandeur, will rival even this scenic country; for our own dear Canada is beautiful too, though lying dormant under the paralyzing influence of that power which oppresses her sons, and crushes the spirit of enterprise. But, to proceed; the talented refugee, Mr. Bidwell called on me yesterday, tendering his kindest sympathies, that, indeed, consisted of more substance than words, as he most benevolently opened his purse, giving me his valuable advice, withal, for which I was deeply grateful. He was much affected when speaking of Canada's wrongs, and the melancholy circumstances attending the recent ineffectual struggle for liberty; for he had been a sufferer himself, and hoped that England would indeed be lenient to those political offenders, who had already suffered so much from being sent into captivity. Thus, my dear friend, have those brilliants who shed a lustre on Canada, and whose virtue and eloquence might well do honor to the country, been driven from her soil. Alas, alas! when will it be otherwise? Surely not until those who are alone worthy, shall hold the reins of government.

I was, this morning, accompanied to the packet ship in which I expect to sail within a few days, by Mr. Irvin, the gentleman to whom Mr. Merritt introduced me, and who has kindly procured me a letter of introduction, from a friend of his, to the Honorable Charles A. Murray, master of the Queen's household, for which I am most thankful, as Mr. Murray's influence will be of no slight importance. I have here met my cousin,

Dr. Park, who, with Mr. Durand and their families, have just returned from England. They unite in saying that the only hope for the unhappy prisoners rests in my application, as their legal friends can do nothing for them in point of law. Will it not, indeed, be wonderful if I accomplish any good? Do, my friend, pray earnestly for my success and support. I trust that God will hear our prayers and yet loose the bonds of the prisoners. I am now nearly ready to embark, and will soon bid adieu to America; and should I indeed go to the antipodes, I shall cease not to remember the gratitude I owe to the generous sympathy of the American people, who have befriended me so very materially. The aid I have received from them amounts to about three hundred dollars, which, together with the assistance provided by my friends in Canada, may come far short of what my necessities may require in a strange and expensive country; still I feel not to despond; PERSEVERANCE is my motto, and, I doubt not, but that kind Providence hitherto so mercifully providing for, will continue to protect and succour me.

Mr. Durand was one of the deputation of gentleman who acted in behalf of the prisoners already released. He has, also, given me letters; consequently I have the happy prospect of not being destitute of friends in England. I have just received a kind letter from Elder Tucker, of Rochester, enclosing an evidence of that gentleman's commiseration. It is now Saturday evening, and on Monday the ship is to sail; she has a most comfortable cabin, and carries me out for seventy-

five dollars, which is twenty-five less than the ordinary price. I will keep this letter open, and should time permit, will, on Monday, give the intermediate incidents.

MONDAY MORNING.—I attended church yesterday morning, and heard a most able and impressive discourse from the pathetic appeal of the Macedonian to the apostle, in the vision, “come over and help us”—Acts, xvi, 9—delivered by the Rev. Spencer H. Cone, who applied his text in a masterly manner, clearly showing the responsibility devolving upon christian professors to exhibit the precious truths of “the ever blessed and glorious gospel,” to a perishing world. In the morning, I accompanied the kind family of Mr. Colgate, to whom Mr. Johnston introduced me, to the Mulberry Tabernacle, and heard an excellent and energetic sermon, from a young man, whose name I did not learn. How consoling are the sacred truths of scripture, to the tried and afflicted spirit, who realizes the vanity of all things here below.

I must close, as we sail within a few hours. You will hear from me after my arrival in England, through my brother T., to whom I shall write as occurrences transpire, should the Lord be pleased to prosper the voyage.

Adieu,

MARIA WAIT

LETTER XVIII.

LONDON, December 20, 1839.

My Dear Brother:

Three months have now elapsed since I wrote you from N.Y.; immediately after which, I sailed for this country. I am most happy in saying, I had an excellent passage, of twenty-one days, and landed at Portsmouth, where I could, from my hotel window, see the York hulk, on board of which my poor dear husband spent last winter, in wretched suffering; but as the object of my solicitude, with his unfortunate companions, had gone still farther, I looked upon the engine of cruelty with feelings of mingled horror and reverence; the latter for having once held a being dear to me.

I was remarkably well at sea, being mercifully preserved from sickness, while many of the passengers endured much. I enjoyed the voyage exceedingly, and never, before, looked with the wonder and admiration on the works of God, as I did while gazing on the magnificent grandeur of the mountainous and mighty deep, during and after a storm. The sea in motion on a dark night has a phosphorescent appearance, and presents to the eye a vast expanse, glistening with innumerable and sparkling brilliants, while the wake of the ship, for some distance, looks like a transparent stream or rather resembles the phosphoric appearance of wood, when in a state of decomposition, and which is so frequently met with in our American forests. This is generally supposed to be caused by a minute species of animalcule; with which the sea is so abundantly

filled, while a few still ascribe it to the saline properties of the water; but from whatever cause it may proceed, I can admire the grand effect, and adore the power divine, "which laid the measures thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." He, indeed "made the deep to boil," and a bright path to shine in the waters; for which he is worthy to be praised by the master being of his workmanship, man, whom he has condescended so "fearfully and wonderfully to make in his own image," giving him the ennobling powers of intellect.

We had some very fine weather that happily gave me an opportunity of witnessing a sunset at sea, the praises of which have so often been sung, it is needless for me to essay a description; I will merely add that it is superbly splendid and that I have been lost in admiration while viewing the resplendent orb declining beneath the horizon, and sinking, to appearance, in the depth below; his parting rays shedding the most beautiful and varied tints upon the western arch, giving it all that softness which is a celebrated characteristic of the Italian sky, and which lost nothing in richness and beauty, by reflection on the expansive bosom of the ocean.

On the evening of the twenty-sixth day after leaving America, land was descried by the "man in the fore-top," and, in accents of joy, *land* was re-echoed throughout the ship. We were informed by the Captain, that we were passing the Scilly Isles; and that, as we were now on the English coast, he hoped to land us at Portsmouth the next day. The morning

proved very fine, affording us an excellent opportunity of beholding the majestic and chalky cliffs at the western extremity of the exquisite Isle of Wight, to which we approached very near, in passing through the Needles.

In sailing up the north side of the island, I saw, for the first in my life, the beautifully green, and neatly trimmed hedges of England. They give a rich and garden-like appearance to the fields; and you may readily suppose that the country, in a high state of cultivation, presenting, occasionally, the turrets of an ancient castle, was not an unpleasant sight to those who had not seen land for many days. Had my mind been at rest, I should doubtless have enjoyed these scenes superlatively; but, feeling that I was entering a strange land, alone and unprotected, (save by Him who is ever near the desolate,) with arduous duties before me, I was, indeed, ill fitted to appreciate the beauties thus presented to me.

I saw but little of Portsmouth, as I merely passed through it the morning following my arrival, on my way to London, a distance of seventy miles—forty of which I came by rail way. The town is well fortified, and celebrated for its fine docks. I was perfectly amazed, though amused withal, at the manner in which travellers are here beset for porter's and servant's fees. You pay one for taking your baggage to the hotel—another for placing it in your room—a third for returning it to the hall—a fourth for putting it on the coach—the coachman then tips his hat in expectation of his *douceur*, for driving you, although you have

paid at the proper office, the sum required for your passage—each of these worthies expecting at least an English shilling for his services. The same custom prevails among the visible servants of the hotels; and at every change of conveyance, a new lackey lifts his hat, until the traveller, unaccustomed to these things, fancies himself a *regular subject for leeches*, and consequently puts his hand in his pocket, whenever any one approaches him.

Travelling by coach the distance of thirty miles, I had a fine view of the country; many parts of it however, are very barren, especially in the region of the chalk hills, through which immense excavations have been made, to afford a more easy and gradual ascent; and, indeed, every care is taken here, to preserve good roads, over which one rattles with great celerity.

In passing through Farnham, the great hop country, we saw multitudes of the peasantry gathering this article, so extensively cultivated and used here. This merry season, for the poor peasants, was not unaccompanied by their usual visiters on these occasions. The gipsies were in attendance, to tell the fortunes of the credulous, to whisper some ominous and mysterious sentence in the ears of the sceptical, and pick up what might fall in their way during their nocturnal excursions—a brown and squallid looking people, indeed, who wander from place to place; some on foot, while others may have a donkey and small cart, the latter affording them shelter for rest, beneath which, is suspended an iron pot, or some article in which they cook their food.

The rail roads here are constructed on a much more solid and permanent basis than those in America—the entire rail being cast iron. There are three classes of cars; the first fitted up in superb style, the second less so, and the third simply a box, without shelter, in which those ride who are unable to pay more than a trifling sum. The passenger feels nothing of that unpleasant jar so universally experienced on our roads, and sits with all the comfort and ease that he could in his own arm-chair.

I reached this city about four P. M., in company with a gentleman and lady, who were fellow passengers with me from New York; on the following morning, they left the inn to visit their friends; while I, realizing the loneliness of my situation, set out on the grand business of my mission. My first call was at 137, Cheap side; Mr. Ashurst was not in, but I saw Mr. Waller, of whom Mr. Wait wrote as taking a deep interest in the Canadians; he kindly invited me to his house, until I could procure suitable lodgings. I informed him to whom I had brought letters, and he rendered me much assistance, by giving me the addresses of those persons, and writing to others whom he knew. Ascertaining that Lord Durham was in town, I immediately waited upon him with letters from Mr. Merritt and Mr. Choules; he enclosed them in a communication from himself to Lord John Russel, then Colonial Secretary, and informed him of what he knew of the circumstances, hoping his Lordship would give the matter his attention. I learned that Wm. Allen, a benevolent gentleman, of the society of Friends, had influ-

ence with Lord John; to him I presented letters from Lindley Murray Moore, of Rochester, and Mr. Durand of Canada; upon which he kindly offered his services, and appointed a time when he would accompany me to his Lordship. I next presented letters of introduction from Mr. Choules, to the Reverend Drs. Reed and Cox, of Hackney, who kindly advised with, and gave me their influence. I had, also, a letter from Mrs. Choules, to Mrs. Reed, in whom, as well as Miss. Goss, an authoress who was residing at Dr. Cox's, both talented and accomplished ladies, I have found invaluable friends; for whose kindness to me, in this hour of trial, I must ever feel the deepest emotions of gratitude. These dear friends soon procured me an excellent boarding house, in their immediate vicinity. Here I felt the consolation of christian sympathy; without which, at this time, I could scarcely have been sustained. Female prayer meetings were held, where the most earnest and affectionate appeals were made to the throne of Heaven, for strength to be given me, and for the prosperity of the mission; that husbands and fathers, who were suffering in bondage, and whose characters had not been stained with moral crime, might be restored to their families and friends; oft in these precious seasons, have I felt my vigor renewed, and been encouraged to press forward in the contest with the most sanguine hope of success.

I availed myself of the kind interest of Dr. Reed, Dr. Cox, and Mr. Roebuck, with my friend, Wm. Allen, and waited on Lord John, who would present a petition to the Queen for me, which was all he then felt

himself at liberty to do. He, however, eventually transferred the matter to Lord Normanby, upon whom I waited, with my memorial to the Queen. His Lordship received me most graciously, and regretted much that he could not act at once, from the impulse of his feelings, and give me encouragement of my request being granted; but he would present my petition to her Majesty, and confer with other Ministers on the subject—then acquaint me with the result. In the mean time, every effort was made, by my female friends, to elicit the sympathy and interest of the ladies at court; and my friend Wm. Allen, kindly introduced me to his cousin, the celebrated Mrs. Fry, most justly styled “the female Howard of England;” whose philanthropic heart was soon engaged in my behalf. She is in frequent communication with the Ministers—is a friend of the Duchess of Sutherland, who is mistress of the robes—has been presented to the Queen, and is acquainted with the Governor of Van Dieman’s Land, to whom she has kindly written in behalf of the prisoners: she will also exert her influence here. And apart from every interested consideration, I think her the most majestic woman, in appearance, that I have ever seen, and most peculiarly adapted, in ability, to the humane enterprises in which she is so benevolently and extensively engaged.

Lady Barham, who is now in waiting upon the Queen, has been successfully approached through a friend, and has most kindly laid the matter before her Majesty, who, to use lady B’s own language, in a recent communication, “expressed herself as being much

touched with the circumstances of the case, and was pleased to say, that she would consult her ministers on the subject, when, should it be deemed practicable, she would be glad to listen to the application, and grant the request; though it was most difficult to act in these matters." Thus has the private influence of those benevolent ladies surrounding the throne, been exerted upon the Queen, whom lady B. says, "to know is to love;" but who, you readily perceive, is a mere automaton, to be moved by the ministers of state, except in matters exclusively personal, as she can only act in accordance with their views, touching cases of policy, although she does, indeed, exercise more than a nominal prerogative, relative to those connected with her private wishes and interests.

Upon the Honorable Mr. Murray's receipt of the letter I brought from New York, he most kindly interceded with Lord N., and wrote me the result of his interview, which I here inclose.

WINDSOR CASTLE.

Madam:

"I would not trouble you with a reply to your note of the 15th until I had seen and spoken with the Secretary of State, respecting the prospect that he can hold out, of a mitigation of your husband's punishment.

"You must be aware, that however touched he may be by your distress, as well as by your devoted perseverance in your husband's behalf, Lord Normanby is obliged, as a responsible adviser of the Crown, to exercise his prerogatives impartially, and according to just and fixed principles; he has every disposition to consider your case favorably, but the ultimate result must depend much upon your husband's own conduct, as well as upon that of the Canadas during this ensuing winter; because, if they should again show

signs of disaffection and disturbance, the government will necessarily be prevented from exercising that mercy to which they might otherwise be inclined.

“Will you allow me to ask, whether pecuniary distress is, at present, added to your other afflictions? If it is so, I shall be happy to contribute any thing in my power to your relief from that portion of your trouble.

“Your's, very faithfully,

“CH. A. MURRAY.

“Mrs. Wait.”

This leaves me in a state of suspense, which, I fear, may be protracted. I must either wait the result here, with most limited means, or return, without having accomplished my purpose; and I cannot think of going to V. D. L. until I get a final answer to my memorial. I can alone leave my case with God, trusting that, as He has hitherto so mercifully raised me up friends, and provided for my necessities, He will continue to guide and direct, and, eventually, overrule all for good.

You will have seen, by the papers, that the Queen is to be married in Feb'y; on which occasion, I trust, through a happy influence, she may feel at liberty to do an act of mercy; though this is yet to be known; consequently I must remain in England this winter, for which I am ill prepared—my expenses being unavoidably great. I cannot board for less than five dollars per week, with any comfort; without which I could not live in this country, as the humidity of the climate is very severe upon me, and my health but delicate.

I have not heard from my dear husband since my arrival, but have written, to inform him of my being

here; and have sent duplicates of the certificates of his character to Sir John Franklin, Governor of V. D. L., who has been written to by a number of influential friends in his behalf. I have also transmitted testimonials of Mr. Chandler's character to him, and have presented Mrs. Chandler's petition to the Earl of Durham, as directed. Should I be unsuccessful in my applications for their release, I hope to make many friends for them in their land of exile—to procure, at least, an amelioration of their sufferings, and, eventually, go there myself.

Do, my kind brother, write me frequently, and inform me of my beloved child. I feel assured that you will now bestow that kindness and affection upon my poor orphan, that you have ever manifested for her unfortunate mother, who owes you more than a sister's love. I know, too, that the dear pet is with those who will love and cherish her, for which, I trust, they will be richly rewarded. I am most anxious to hear of our dear father and brothers, and, indeed, all friends, who, I dare say, are equally anxious to know how the adventurer is likely to succeed; yet the answer is in futurity, and God only knows what it may be; thankful am I that I can leave the case with Him who has power both in heaven and earth; my prayer is, that these trials may be richly sanctified, and all redound to His glory.

The fogs are very dense here, and at times, the atmosphere, in the city so heavy, that I have seen the streets lighted by lamps at mid-day; there is generally, at this season of the year, a thick cloud of smoke

hovering over London, upon which the rays of the sun occasionally cast a crimson tint, giving it, at a distance, the appearance of clouds arising from a continuous mass of smouldering ruins, and which is occasioned by the consumption of so enormous a quantity of coal, as no other fuel is used here.

This climate is more temperate than ours; still, the dampness, in this vicinity, paralyzes the system, and most sensibly affects respiration. Some medical gentleman has recently invented a peculiar apparatus for purifying the air; which is worn upon the mouth, and through which the atmosphere is inhaled, being divested, by a chemical process, from all properties obnoxious to the lungs. These respirators are worn by multitudes; and, indeed, the philanthropic design of the inventor is obvious, as consumption is very prevalent.

The finest youths are cut down with this dreadful disease in a most terrific manner; and very often whole families are taken off, one after another, in such rapidity, that one is almost constrained to believe it contagious. I have seen an aged mother weeping over the portraits of four beloved and beautiful children, who had all fallen victims to this dreadful scourge, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four—and that within two years—the fifth, who was a medical gentleman, was likewise attacked, and recently sailed for the Island of Madeira, in hope that the change of climate might restore him, although the ravages of the destroyer were visible in every lineament of his features.

And now, my dear brother, although you are in expectation of a description of this grand emporium of

commerce, art, and science, I fancy you will be rather disappointed; as I can tell you but little of the wonderful and magnificent metropolis; its palaces, abbeys, and various monuments of architectural skill; its capacious parks, and serpentine rivers; its statues from the chisels of the most celebrated sculptors, which remain in grandeur, as relics of ancient times, when the marble Queen Elizabeth, who stands in the church yard of the glorious St. Paul's, was in, *propria persona*, swaying the sceptre of England, and ministering death to the victims of her capricious tyranny; or, when the monarch Charles the first, who is mounted on his horse upon a pedestal seventeen feet high, at Charing Cross, laid his head upon the block at White hall, in obedience to the decree of the Commonwealth—neither can I give you an idea of the stupendous and colossal statue of Achilles, with his shield, which is a specimen of more modern art, and was erected in Hyde Park, by the loyal ladies of this country, in honor of the victorious hero of Waterloo—nor indeed can I tell you how I have gone from one place to another, through crowded streets, and still been mercifully preserved from all evil—with what feelings I have looked upon the great extremes of opulence, and the most abject want, involuntarily exclaiming, oh! that the superfluity of the one might, in a measure, be devoted to the laudable purpose of giving bread to the other, with the dissemination of useful instruction, that they might be raised from their state of servile ignorance and misery and led to the knowledge—that the beneficent Creator, in His bountiful dispensation of gifts to man, was *im-*

partial—that His intelligent creatures are all susceptible of moral, social, and political virtues, and that their state of degradation can, in no wise, be imputed to an inadequacy of the Divine munificence, but is alone attributable to the selfish ambition and arrogance of their fellow-men, who, for the gratification of their own sinister motives and desires for power, would sink those to a level with the brute creation, whom God has endued with capacity capable of progressive improvement throughout the perpetuity of existence. But, alas, if even the gospel truth, that there is salvation provided for fallen man, has, perchance, reached their ears, they have but little idea of the christian requirements, and cannot believe that they have ever offended the majesty of Heaven; fancying themselves quite secure, if they speak with reverence of the “holy mother church,” and can but repeat a prayer which they may have been taught to rehearse by some clerical officiate who, too frequently, assumes the title of “Right Rev. Father in God.”

Happy are we, if we personally embrace the exalted privileges of the christian. Are we not favored of God in hearing the sublime truths of the gospel faithfully applied to the heart, while thousands of our fellow mortals are sinking around us, whose shrouded minds have never been illuminated by the rays of Divine revelation, and this too in enlightened nations? But, be it known, to the honor of British christians, and more especially the dissenting portions, that they are making every exertion for the spiritual and temporal welfare of their suffering countrymen; devoting their

energies most particularly to the rising generation. Light is thus beaming upon those who have long been lying in darkness, and in the shadow of death, through the inefficient ministrations of a corrupt unevangelical, and dominant priesthood, who exhibit the form, but are still strangers to the fundamental doctrines and spirit of christianity. Happily, the scriptures are now being generally distributed; home missionary societies established; and, indeed, every means used to enlighten the poor—may they have food to sustain their perishing bodies also. You can form no idea of their wants until you have witnessed them, as there is nothing, *thank heaven*, to equal it in America. For instance; I will just repeat a tale of woe, which I heard related with no ordinary feeling and agitation, by a Mr. Robinson, who is an agent of the "christian instruction society" in this city, and who was, himself, the benevolent actor in the scene, but a day or two since, while on a mission of mercy to the poor. He knocked at the door of a dreary abode, in a by-lane, and while waiting for an answer, heard the sobs of some one evidently in distress; he accordingly opened the door, and, on entering, perceived that the moans proceeded from a young female; he enquired the cause of her mourning, on which she wept more convulsively. He endeavored to console, and soothingly entreated her to tell the cause of her sorrow, with assurance that he would do any thing in his power to relieve her. The poor girl pointed to a ricketty stair way, and exclaimed, "my father, my mother." Mr. R. immediately ascended the steps, and groping his way through a dark lobby,

entered a garret, in a corner of which was extended, on a miserable pallet, an infirm old man, apparently in the last stage of want and hunger; in his hand was clenched a hard, brown crust, from which he was vainly endeavoring to extract nourishment. Mr. R. spoke kindly to him—the large tears stood in the sockets of his sudden eyes, as he motioned to his side, on his own wretched couch, where Mr. R. discovered the corpse of his wife, who had died the day before. The pious man of God fell upon his knees, and implored sustaining strength from above, to bear him through the appalling scene, from which he arose and prepared to remove the dead from the side of the still living companion; but the old man clung to the lifeless body of his wife, with all his remaining strength, while, in accents of despair, he entreated that they might not be separated, as he must soon follow. Mr. R., however succeeded in this sad effort of duty; and covering the corpse with some tattered garments, lying in the place, hastened to procure food, to resuscitate the survivors, which he administered in small quantities, that were eagerly seized by the starving father and child. He then sought the proper authorities to bury the dead, while he removed the old man to a hospital at his own expense, and took the disconsolate daughter to where she might be provided for until she was able to work.

While one is reflecting upon these awful and soul-stirring realities, the attention is arrested by the funeral procession of the wealthy, which passes along in slow and solemn pomp—mace bearers, in rich, mourning habiliments—a hearse, surmounted with sable

plumes—jet black horses, covered with velvet palls, while their heads are ornamented with festoons of ribbons and feathers, all displaying the grandeur of magnificent wo—the mind shrinks from the contemplation of those extreme and painful contrasts of want and extravagance, and retiring within itself, bewails the obvious and lamentable cause.

But I must desist, or you will grow weary of these melancholy details, and be ready to cry mercy; and, indeed, I can sympathise most fully in your feelings, as it has cost me no slight degree of emotion, to represent, faithfully, occurrences of so sad and touching a nature.

I will write again immediately on the receipt of any communication from the government, relative to my application, which I do trust, may be favorable; and hope soon to be cheered by a kind letter from the Land of the Free.

Your's, affectionately,

M. WAIT.

LETTER XIX.

PONDER'S END, near London,

May, 1840.

My Dear Brother:

Your kind letter of February, came duly to hand, and I am most happy to hear of the welfare of my dear child and friends. I wrote you in my last, that I intended to supplicate an act of mercy on the mar-

riage of the Queen, which I did; and which would, doubtless, have been granted, had there not been such a multiplicity of similar appeals, that it precluded the possibility of her Majesty's acting in any. The Chartist, Frost and Williams, have been tried and sentenced to death, for treason, since my residence here; and, unfortunately for the success of my application, there was a powerful influence exerted for them on this occasion. The lives of these unfortunate individuals have happily been spared, and they are now on their way to Van Dieman's Land, to expiate the offence of striving to obtain bread for their starving countrymen, by a life of ignominious servitude. If man would not resist that oppression, which compels him to suffer the pangs of unappeased hunger, pray what would induce him to raise his arm in opposition to tyranny? I do hope that the horrid corn law policy, the pernicious influence of which, like a *mephitical sirocco*, blights the energies, and emaciates the frames of the laboring classes here; may be speedily repealed, or abridged in some manner, even should it be hastened by the suicidal efforts of the devoted Chartists, as ruin is the inevitable consequence of those participations.

I have received a letter from my poor enslaved husband, dated at Hobarttown, in August, informing me of the most torturing sufferings endured on the passage out, and of the death of poor McLeod and McNulty in consequence. He was himself in the colonial hospital, just recovering from a severe illness. They were treated as felons, and had been informed that they were to be assigned to *masters* in the country, and prevented

from holding any communication with each other. This was, indeed, most cruel; but I trust, has, 'ere this, been remedied; as many influential letters have gone out from here in their behalf, since my arrival. If they are not immediately released, their suffering will be much ameliorated; and, should God spare their lives, the time cannot be far distant, when they will be restored to happy liberty. I have besieged the government on every hand—have had the best of influence, which I think must eventually prevail. If otherwise, I will endeavor to reach the land of their captivity and do something for them there, though I must leave my dear child and friends in America.

Through the interest of dear Mrs. Reed, and some other kind ladies, I have been favored in an interview with the Dowager, Lady Grey, a most energetic and benevolent personage, who has interested many of her friends in my case, and written me the kind notes which follow.

“Saturday.

“Dear Mrs. Wait:

“I saw Lady Barham yesterday, and learned from her, that Lord Normanby had spoken most kindly on the subject of your affairs, as regarded his own feelings, for your painful situation: she expected a letter from him, which she intended to send to you. I fear nothing is likely to be done satisfactory to you at present, but it is comfortable for you to know that a kindly feeling is produced by your efforts. I will write to Sir J. Franklin, and it has just occurred to me, that copies of those handsome testimonials to Mr. Wait's character and former conduct, might be useful to send to him. If you think so, will you forward them to me? I shall be careful about the copy you sent me of Mr. W's letters. I return Lady B's letter, and remain,

“Very sincerely, your's,

“MARY GREY.”

"Dear Mrs. Wait:

"I think you had better send me your letters and testimonials.

"Sincerely your's,

"M. G.

"Eaton Place, *Tuesday*,

"I believe Sir E. Parry will write to Sir John Franklin, which is better than my writing."

I have already complied with her Ladyship's request, availing myself of the influence of her friend, the celebrated Sir Edward Parry, with his cotemporary navigator, Sir John Franklin, who, I trust, will be induced to listen to the numerous intercessions from this country, and extend a corresponding degree of lenity to my husband, and the other American exiles.

I have, also, had interviews with the Hon. Charles Buller, who was private secretary to Lord Durham, while in Canada, and who is now a member of Parliament here, as well as general Colonial agent. He has written me of having seen both Lord Normanby and Lord John Russel, on the subject of my memorial—both of which letters I will here transcribe, as you may better understand the situation of the case by a perusal of them, yourself.

"12 Lower Eaton st.,

"Monday, May 12, 1840.

"Dear Madam:

"I was lucky enough to see Lord John Russel, immediately after I left you on Saturday. Nothing could be more kind than his conduct: and though nothing can be done for the remission of your husband's sentence, until after the settlement of the question of the Union, I think there are great hopes that when that great work is achieved, and tranquillity completely restored, the prisoners may be restored to their country; and, I think that Lord John Russel seems disposed, under present circumstances, to alleviate their sufferings, and reduce the punishment simply to that of exile. He

desired me, however, to write to him on the subject. This I have done this morning, and in the course of a few days, I think, you will hear from me again, to inform you of Lord John's answer. I trust that it will be such as to give you some consolation.

Yours very faithfully,

CHARLES BULLER, Jr.

—
"12 Lower Eaton st.,

"Thursday, May 31, 1840.

"Madam:

"I saw Lord Normanby on Saturday, and inquired respecting the possibility of a remission of your husband's sentence. I am sorry to say that his Lordship's answer was as I had anticipated, that it would be impossible to do this at once. I am happy, however, to be able to assure you, that his tone was most kind; and I think it very probable, that advantage will be taken of the passing of the Union, to pardon the prisoners compromised for political disturbances in Canada.

"I am, Madam,

"Your's faithfully,

CHA'S BULLER, Jr."

I remained in London until January, when, finding my resources nearly exhausted, and my health sinking under intense anxiety, and the effects of a depressive atmosphere, I was almost in a state of despondency, and scarce knew whither to turn; but, as ever, succor was near. My assiduous and affectionate friend, Mrs. R., informed me, that she had recently visited a friend of hers, a widow lady, a few miles out of town, who wanted a companion; and as she had mentioned me to her, she hoped we would enjoy each other's society, which I looked upon as especially providential, and most joyfully accompanied Mrs. R., to her friend, Mrs. Ellis, who, I have found, a most kind and hospitable lady—a humble minded follower of the Sa-

viour, with whom I have been very comfortable. She has a nice little retired cottage, pretty grounds, and keeps two servants. I am thankful to say, that the wholesome air, and quiet of the country, have been conducive of benefit to my health; and though I have but little means left, faith still whispers, that "the hand that's held me hitherto, will lead me all my journey through;" and that, although the hand of God is heavy upon me, yet underneath are the everlasting arms; and I would not, my dear brother, suffer one pang less than what is in accordance with the divine will, but I would profit by them, and admire the magnificence of that love which draws rebellious man to God, even by affliction. May He sanctify our trials, as well as our mercies, for his own name's sake and accept us in Christ, the Redeemer.

I am in the city nearly every week; and it is thought by my friends, who are disposed to favor my wishes of joining my husband, in case of defeat, that a passage may be procured for me to V. D. L. should I not receive more favourable communications from the government in the course of a month or two, which determination has been rather confirmed by the receipt of Lady Barham's letter as follows.

Cavendish Square, Wednesday.

"Madam:

"I am very sorry that so long a time should have elapsed without answering your letter, and more particularly so, as I am unable to raise your hopes, or to alleviate your present distress.

"Lord Normanby regrets, deeply, that his sense of public duty will not permit of his advising the Queen to comply with your request, as he conceives Mr. Wait was very seriously implicated, at

the time of the rebellion. Any *future mitigation* of Mr. Wait's sentence, must be taken in connexion with that of his companions in banishment; since it is Lord N's opinion, that it would be unjust to *them* to make any exception, and that only on private grounds. But Lord Normanby seems to imply, that Mr. Wait's own conduct for the future, and the *continuance* of tranquillity in Canada, may hereafter furnish a plea for mercy in his behalf.

"I need hardly say how much the Queen regrets her inability, under these circumstances, to remove the cause of your distress, and how much I feel at being obliged to communicate it to you. Under this trying affliction, it will be a consolation to you to feel, dear madam, that more will not be laid upon you here, than is right and good for you; and that He who afflicts, is *too wise to err*, and *too good to be unkind*; and that every wave here, tosses you the nearer to the haven.

"I have the honor, madam, with every feeling of sympathy,
to be

"Your's, very truly,

"F. BARRHAM."

I have now the prospect of a six months voyage at sea, which, indeed, is nothing in comparison to the agonizing thought of a continued separation from my child, who must thus be deprived of a mother's care, and the severing of the tenderest ties of natural affection. I dare not dwell on this painful and enervating subject, but will endeavor to submit all to the guidance and direction of a merciful and omniscient God, who does all things well, and knows the end from the beginning. I am, with the assistance of kind and generous friendship, making some preparation for the passage; and shall, in all probability, if nothing more favorable occurs, be on the ocean in July, bound for Australia.

It would be superfluous for me to say anything relative to the great National event, on the 10th February,

as you have, doubtless, already had the most minute particulars laid before you, through the world's medium of intelligence. You have been told of the magnificent and splendid fitting up of palaces, and the royal chapel, where the marriage was solemnized, with a degree of pomp far transcending any thing of the day—the triumphal arches composed of wreaths of evergreens and fragrant blossoms, through which the happy pair and their retinue passed, on their way to Windsor castle—how they were greeted by joyful multitudes, upon whom they condescended to smile complacently, and to whom they were occasionally, even pleased to bow—the illumination of cities—peals of artillery—ringing of church bells, and the hundreds of thousands of pounds expended on the occasion—the royal bride's apparel alone, consuming some thousands of the same; and, indeed, you have heard the whole. I did not go up to London, and can truly say, I have but little curiosity to witness the pageantry and trappings of royalty, the sad concomitants of which are enough to behold. But I have had some delightful rambles through nature's exquisite beauties, in which there is no alloy, and have enjoyed the luxurious sight of green fields and romantic hills, which present a perfect picture of rural loveliness. How sweet and fresh is the bracing air of the country, compared to the condensed atmosphere of crowded cities. The fields are now rich with primroses, daises, cowslips and buttercups; here the atmosphere is fragrant with the odour of the black thorn, and the sweet may hedges, which so universally adorn this country. I have welcomed the delicate

snow-drop, the crocus, the variegated polyanthus, and the ever valued smile of the violet, at a season when our fields are still lying under the pressure of snow-banks, and vegetation has not yet merged through the frozen surface; indeed I have drunk in the beauties of this early spring, with a degree of ecstacy only to be accounted for by the vivifying influence of such gladdening scenes upon the weary and afflicted spirit.

My kind hostess, Mrs. E., has taken me to Berry farm, the residence of her son, a few miles distant; there were burrows and warrens of hare and rabbits, which afford rich repasts to the hospitable owner and his guests; there, also, were some ancient trees, in which the rooks nestle and caw, all serving to remind one of the poetic strains of the English bards. I visited the estate of another gentleman in this vicinity, a few days since, in company with a friend, and enjoyed the rich treat of walking through the most tastefully laid out grounds that I have yet seen. The variegated and enamelled ivy, with the lovely convolvulus, were twining round the tendrils of the blooming thorn; hyacinths were sending abroad their rich perfume; and while passing down the smooth gravel walks, we were greeted with a profusion of flowers and shrubbery of almost every variety of the season—many of which are extravagantly fine—there, too, were artificial lakes, in which the gold fish sported in graceful freedom, displaying the most delicate carmine and silver hues, as he catches the rays of the sun in approaching the surface, while making his circuit round the gushing fountain in the center of his watery domain—

bowers invite you to rest under their fragrant shade, of clematis and honeysuckle, from which retreat you may observe the sweet economists of nature, extracting the nectareous load from the surrounding blossoms, and depositing the same in the cells of a glass hive, whose transparency enables you to watch their industrious labors. The heart's-ease, so little noticed with us, is here cultivated with great care and attention, and is most exquisitely beautiful, being nearly three times as large as any I have seen in America. I have been shown some fine specimens of the dahlia, which is also reared with success, in this country. Nothing can exceed the order, taste, and splendor of the domains of the rich; could one but live amid these fairy scenes, and not meet the opposite extreme at every turn, England, with her delightful pleasure gardens, her refined and polished society, and her high state of domestic economy, ease and comfort, would indeed, be an enrapturing paradise. But wo sits upon the pallid features of the sons and daughters of poverty, who are, by far, the most numerous class, and in whose countenances, want is written in characters too legible to be mistaken; this foul blemish not only darkens the glorious picture, but literally obscures it; and the American turns from the scene with disgust, offering his grateful tribute to God, that the fair genius of freedom, reigns in his native land, dispensing the rich blessings of equal rights, with civil, and religious liberty.

Here all must pay the odious church rates; no matter what his religious creed may be, he is obliged to support the dignitaries of the establishment, who are

pampered and clothed in purple, almost by the life's blood of the poor, as the last farthing is seized upon by this rapacious hierarchy, whose kingdom, forsooth, is not of this world, (query, where is it?) while the poor children they rob, are famishing for bread.

If the conscientious dissenter refuses to pay this unjust tax, he is immediately cited to appear before an ecclesiastical court; does he not then compromise the matter, he is torn from his family and thrust into a loathsome prison, from which there is no return, but in that sacrifice of christian principle; which liquidates the iniquitous charge. There is an instance of noble resistance to this legal oppression, in the case of John Thorogood, a poor shoe maker, of Chelmsford, who has lain in jail eighteen months, in consequence of adhering to the praise-worthy resolution of suffering the penalty of non-compliance. Would to God there were more John Thorogoods among the great body of dissenters in this country. If they would but follow this glorious example, "*en masse*," how soon would they triumph, and the evil be removed. I have seen it stated in the papers, that, although his health is declining, in consequence of his long confinement, he is still unmoved, and will die a martyr in the cause, rather than yield the right of conscience and christian equity, by paying five shillings and six pence to the scourge of his country. Petitions in his behalf, and protests against the right of detention, are being sent in scores to the house of Parliament; and although it is almost daily acting in the matter, I fear there will nothing salutary be effected; for, should

they emancipate the non-adherents to the church of state, from this burden, it would greatly lessen its revenue; and, consequently, in a measure, sap the foundation of the aristocracy; and England's proud nobles *must* roll in voluptuous splendor, though the means be wrested from the shrinking vitals of the poor.

I must not forget to tell you, that Ponder's End is near Edmonton, and that I frequently travel the road which the famous John Gilpin came in such alarming haste, on the anniversary of his wedding day; yes, and as I have passed the sign of the celebrated Bell of Edmonton, where poor Mrs. Gilpin waited her smoking dinner, in anxious expectation of the arrival of her unfortunate spouse, who was, in the mean time, making his grand entre to Ware. I have laughed outright at the thought of being on the scene of this marvellous adventure, so facetiously described by Cowper. But I shall leave the sweet air of the country in a few days, and return to town, where I will remain until I sail; and as this is the month in which the various christian and benevolent societies hold their anniversary meetings in London, I will not close this letter, until I have an opportunity of witnessing this great concentration of talent and philanthropy.

From London.

I have attended the meeting of the London Missionary society, in the spacious Exeter Hall, which seats, I am told, six thousand persons—it was well filled on this occasion. Sir George Grey, the honorable son of the Lady Dowager, whom I have mentioned, took the chair, and opened the meeting with an eloquent

and appropriate address, which was peculiarly affecting when he mentioned the melancholy death of the lamented Polynesian missionary and martyr, the Rev. John Williams, the tidings of whose murder, by the natives of Eromanga, one of the New Hebride islands, has but recently reached this country. This devoted and energetic servant of God, had visited nearly all the South Sea islands, and planted the standard of the cross with most wonderful success; but he had now fallen by the hands of those to whom he was presenting the glad tidings of salvation. "This was, indeed, a cause for mourning; but the gospel would triumph, and the sad event which was so deeply deplored, might yet be the means, in the hands of God, of carrying conviction to the hearts of the Cannibals." The report of the society followed; and as one speaker closed another took the floor, until eloquence literally flowed from the platform, while the most touching details were given by missionaries, who had spent years in laboring to bring the life and immortality of the gospel to the hearts of the perishing heathen. They were there from all portions of the globe, and had returned to tell the triumphs of Jesus, and rest, for a time, from their arduous duties, under burning meridians, desolating simooms, and electrical cammins. Among these were the celebrated Richard Knill, Moffat, from the South of Africa, Micaiah Hill, from India, and numbers of others.

Our hearts were indeed made glad with the exhilarating news of the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. A number of pious clergy and missionaries of

the Church of England, lent their abilities on this occasion also.* And here, too, John Angel James, of Birmingham, rose in his power, and made an appeal to the hearts of his auditors, which was loudly responded to; and oh, with what pathos did he dwell on the appalling death of his brother Williams, and quote the sublime and appropriate lamentations of David, "how are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle. O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been; thy love was wonderful." "Yea, how are the mighty fallen. Thou hast fallen, my brother John, but it is to rise in triumphant glory, and cast thy bright crown at the feet of Emanuel." Thus, my dear T., hours were consumed, which seemed but as many moments, while enjoying the luxury of this intellectual feast, and the business of the meeting closed.

*The Rev. M. Hill had been a missionary to Bengal, and labored in India for sixteen years. He most fearlessly exposed the iniquitous practices of the East India Company, who form the government in India, which not only enslaves the natives, and reduces them to the necessity of selling their children for bread, but legalizes taxation for the support of heathen temples, Juggernaut not excepted, for the purpose of strengthening British rule—that, in many instances, had the company been known to colleague with the idolaters, in suppressing and undermining the influence of the devoted missionaries of Christ; and he deplored, most deeply, the injurious effects on their operations—of the connexion which still existed; also, did he "regret that the new penal code, framed by the Indian law commissioners, would, in his opinion, fine, imprison, and banish from the country, the missionaries who had been sent forth to evangelize idolatrous India; and further, that this code would tolerate polygamy the immoral consequences of which were painfully visible throughout that entire wretched country, by the vast number of *Anglo Indians*, which is said to comprise many more than fifty thousand persons at this period."

I have attended a number of similar meetings of a domestic, as well as foreign nature; and regret much, my inability to give you the details by letter, as it is most cheering to see the extent of the benevolent and christian exertions here, where they are so much required. Would that they might reach every sufferer, but they still come far short of the actual need; and nothing can radically effect their benefit, but a more merciful and liberal policy of government, which, I fear, will not be pursued, until the just vengeance of heaven is visited upon the oppressors of the poor. But you must know, that the world's great convention, on the rights of man, is now sitting in London, to which delegates from every quarter, have congregated, in happy union, on the subject of emancipation to the slave. Some of the fair and benevolent ladies of America, are here, as delegates, too, and claim the right of a seat at the convention, with an opportunity of public discussion of the merits of their philanthropic cause. This being contrary to the custom and usage of this nation, has not been conceded to them; consequently these talented ladies have not been heard. It was in vain they plead the rights of women; likewise in vain that their able advocate, George Thompson, defended them, and appealed to the convention in behalf of "the Spartan band of women, who stood between him and death, while in America." In vain that Dr. Bowering "blushed at the ungallant manner in which the magnanimous and philanthropic ladies of America were treated, by Englishmen, who sung huzzannas to their sovereign Queen." The fearless daugh-

ters of America, who were so deservedly compared to the brave Lacedaemonian women, were doomed to silence, while the business of the convention proceeded in Freemason's Hall.

I regret that I have not been able to attend these meetings more frequently; but I do hope to enjoy the last, which will take place at Exeter Hall, and at which the Duke of Sussex is expected to preside. I have, however, attended one, which was somewhat different, though an anti-slavery association, viz., the African Colonization Society. Prince Albert was here announced, amid the deafening peals of the mammoth organ, in the grand Exeter Hall, and the noisy greetings of the vast concourse of people who welcomed him, on his first appearance before them; to which the youthful and amiable looking Prince bowed most gracefully, as he took the chair; after which he opened the meeting, by a short, but prettily delivered speech, in which he expressed his happiness in complying with the wishes of so respectable a portion of her Majesty's subjects, by lending his aid in a cause fraught with so much benevolence and humanity; and which, he assured the meeting, met with the full concurrence of her Majesty, "our beloved Queen." He resumed the chair, while the most enthusiastic cheers rung through the hall. Then came forward the well known philanthropist, Buxton, who met with a warm reception, and who delivered an able address, in which he recounted many a hard contest, and many an obstacle which he had been enabled to surmount, by devoted perseverance in his benevolent course; and, said

he, "I now, with no ordinary degree of gratitude, hail this auspicious day, as earnest of the ultimate consummation of the great enterprise of my life." The report was then read; after which a succession of elegant speeches followed, from Lords, Lords Bishops, Sirs, Right Honorables, &c.; for be it known unto you, that the aristocracy were indeed there. The noble Prince would be obliged to vacate the chair at two o'clock; accordingly, Sir Robert Peel was appointed to return the thanks of the meeting to the royal chairman, which he did with no slight degree of eloquence, and in a beautifully turned compliment, styled him the "right arm of the throne;" at the close of which, the cheering was unbounded, while the Prince, bowing gracefully, left the hall, escorted by his suite.

I think that the most pointed and truly eloquent speech I heard at this meeting, was delivered by Arch-Deacon Wilberforce, who seemed to drink deeply into the spirit of benevolence, which was so eminently manifested by his late noble-minded sire—the indefatigable advocate of human rights in this country, who has gone to reap the rich reward of his philanthropic labors, which have been instrumental in striking the fetters from thousands; though I am not, my dear brother, insensible to the fact, that the twenty millions paid to the West India slave owners, are wrung, by taxes, from the scanty earnings of those in this country who are little less slaves than the blacks, and whose previous burdens were almost beyond human endurance; yet I thank God, that even a portion have been emancipated. When, oh when, will the *demon*,

slavery, be banished from this lovely foot-stool of the Almighty? Can it be until the savior reigns triumphant? I fear not; but still, we may hope for the approach of that happy era. The early friends of the oppressed African had much to contend with; but they were a brave and holy nucleus, round whom a mighty and formidable army has since gathered; and which now forms a phalanx that will, with Divine assistance, press forward, from conquering to conquer, until glorious victory is theirs. May dear America soon lave in the fountain of innocence, and be cleansed from the stain of her brothers' sufferings and blood, which call mightily to heaven for justice, and thus wipe away the only blemish on her beautiful features. *Then* will a halo of untarnished glory wave on her banner, and claim the unlimited applause of an admiring world; and then shall we no more be told by Briton's *fratricidal* aristocrats, that "American *liberty is a mockery*," and that "*American slavery is the greatest anomaly in the history of civilized nations.*"

But I must proceed, and, if possible, give you an idea of the concluding meeting of this convention. We reached the hall at an early hour, as this was the only security for obtaining a seat; the excitement was so general, and the publication of the former conventional speeches, having brought hundreds, who would, perhaps, have not come otherwise. The hall was soon crammed, and numbers went away, unable to enter. We waited, with anxiety, the opening of this illustrious meeting. The organ, however, again peeled forth its grand intonations, and his royal highness, the

Duke of Sussex, made his most graceful appearance, while the lungs of the congregated mass, seemed vying with the music, in giving him a welcome reception. The French Ambassador was seated at the right of the chair. The much admired Duchess of Sutherland entered, on the arm of Mrs. Fry, who escorted her, both taking seats at the right of Monsieur Guizot; after which came the American delegation of gentlemen, while the American ladies, with many of the titled females of England, occupied seats in an elevated wing of the platform; but at the left of the chair sat the venerable Thomas Clarkson, whose head was rich with the silver locks won in his glorious campaign of more than fifty years in the cause of humanity. Near him was his widowed daughter-in-law, and his only grand child, a fine boy, nine years old, who was presented to the royal chairman, as an offering to the sacred cause of liberty. The Duke placed his hand upon the youthful brow, breathed forth a blessing, and hoped that he might tread the illustrious path of his noble progenitor, who, he trusted, would, in him, have a representative worthy his own brilliant career.

After an excellent speech from the Duke, that was repeatedly cheered, the aged veteran arose. The assembly were entreated to desist from any audible manifestation of their feelings, in reverence to the age and debility of the speaker, who delivered an address, which touched the sensibilities of all who heard the warm and generous effusions of his noble mind. It would, in all probability, be the last time that he should meet them on the engrossing subject of his devoted life, as he would

soon be gathered, with his brave compatriots and faithful coadjutors, who had left the field before him; and if he had another life to spend on earth, he would be too happy in consecrating it also to the sacred cause of philanthropy. This was the substance of what I heard, and I do not think that less than 6000 pairs of eyes were moistened by the tear of veneration and sympathy. Mr. Clarkson soon left the hall, supported by Mr. Allen, and another gentleman.

Judge Birney, one of the American delegates, was now announced, who delivered an able and energetic speech, which was duly applauded; but, unfortunately, in the enthusiasm of the moment, he forgot his proximity to the ladies in his immediate vicinity, and retreating a step too far, came in contact with at least a portion of their robes, which was readily perceived by the quick eye of one of his countrymen, and as speedily remedied; though I regret to say, there was no visible apology made by the aggressor; affording a subject for the satire of some of the polished Englishmen present, who pride themselves much on the nice points of etiquette, and are ever ready to sanction the idea that American manners are boorish. Though I was full willing to believe that the honorable, and, *doubtlessly, gallant* Judge, had *looked* an apology to the gracious Duchess, and her companion. The Duchess, who was in a plain suit of mourning, which admirably set off her fine form, wore a magnificent bracelet on her right wrist, bearing the Queen's miniature likeness. The sweet poetess, Mary Howett, was shown to me; also the celebrated Mrs. Opie, so generally known and

esteemed for her valuable writings, was pointed out by a lady who knew her; she appeared rather an elderly person, though the carmine tint had not yet departed from her cheek, and her intelligent countenance spoke of cheerfulness within; her dress was of black satin, bearing the plainness of the costume she had adopted; she was in the crowd, apparently unable to avail herself of a seat. I saw an American gentleman throw her a card, and manifest a desire for her to reach the platform, which, however, seemed quite impracticable; but all was soon forgotten, as the name of O'Connell! O'Connell, was sounded and resounded throughout the assembly, while all were eager to catch a glimpse of the Irish orator, whose noble and independent figure soon merged from the living mass on the stand, when a scene of enthusiastic cheering and tumult ensued, which completely transcends description, and which was answered by the most perfectly graceful bows, while he held his hat in his left hand, and pressed his generous and liberty-loving heart with his right. The most amusing smiles played round his mouth in the mean time, which served as a prelude to the rich and pointed eloquence we were about to enjoy. It was some time before he could be heard; and even when sounds had ceased, the waving of hats and handkerchiefs foreboded another outburst; but the speaker began. I fancied that I had heard eloquence; and I *had heard eloquence* flow in rich profusion from many of the lions of English oratory, whom I had listened to in that hall; but this was an eloquence of a superior order—t'was a voice from the Emerald Isle, which

breathed the sweet tones of the minstrels of Erin—t'was eloquence that entranced the mind with its genuine point, cadence, and melody, which poured forth the soul of the illustrious speaker, in argumentative strains too bewitching to resist; and which told alike on the hearts of his auditors and the heaven-born cause of philanthropy. Ireland, too—the woes of distressed Ireland, were not forgotten by the champion of her rights and liberties, and I sighed for poor Canada, also, as a blessing was invoked for Irish redress, as well as the ultimate success of the cause which had brought to that meeting the agents of humanity from all parts of the Globe, “whose efforts would yet raise the entire human family from a state of degradation and slavery, to that of exulting liberty; and were we to despond of success, the angels of mercy, who are present, would cheer us on to victory. *Yes we will triumph*, for *women* of England and America, you are here to shed the dew drops of heaven on our sacred cause, by the magic of your co-operative influence.” Again the spacious arch rang with tumultuous applause, and the inimitable orator took his seat. An American mulatto, now appeared, who spoke of the wrongs of his fellow-men, with an ability and pathos truly admirable; being a perfect refutation of the inhuman idea, generally supported by the enemies of their race, that the black is deficient in natural intellect; had those arrogant personages been under the sound of his voice, they would doubtless, have soon been undeceived, and would have, at least, admitted, that this *Virginian* was a noble exception. The mee-

ting now closed, and we again descended from elysian entertainments to reach our homes, attend to the ordinary requirements of nature, and dream of the ærial regions through which we had been wafted during the day, now nearly consumed, as it was five o'clock when the concluding speech was made, yet I saw no weariness manifested by the delighted multitude; and you, my dear T., will not be weary of this long epistle, if it gives you one iota of the pleasure, which I have enjoyed 'mid those enchanting scenes; though I crave your indulgence, while I merely touch upon other objects, which have also contributed much to my entertainment and knowledge.

I accompanied a few friends, the other day, on a visit to the Regent's Park Zoological gardens, comprising the finest menagerie in the world, both in regard to the number and variety of its animals; and I think it would be difficult to surpass the symmetrical order and taste exhibited in the fitting up of the whole establishment; the expense of which must be many thousand pounds per annum, exclusive of the original cost of preparing such unique accommodations for the various tenants, all being permitted to enjoy their natural elements—the enclosures, at the same time, affording perfect security to the visiter. The expenses are met by annual subscriptions of the members of the Zoological society, with the shilling paid by each visiter—the latter amounting I should think, to a very considerable sum, as the gardens command much attention, being beautifully ornamented with flowers and shrubbery. Here may be seen almost every species of the quadruped, as well as of the

feathered tribe, from all quarters of the Globe. The stately giraffe has his lofty arched domicile—the elephant his bath—the seal basks at ease on the surface of his pond—the polar bear draws his length along from the recesses of his cavern—while the black and brown are climbing to the top of a pole, planted in the center of their pit, to catch some treat, which entices them up; here is the elegant plumage of the bird of Paradise, and similar beauties with the notes of the sweetest songsters, and the chattering of the paraquet, strangely contrasting with the disproportioned figure, coarse squeaking, and the ordinary appearance of some of their neighbors. I turned from the fleet and greedy ostrich, to notice another and another group, and could not but fancy the picture incomplete, as I looked in vain for the dear little speck of feathered animation, the American humming bird, and could scarcely imagine the propriety of his absence from so general a congregation of his brethren. The gardens are divided by a public thoroughfare, under which there is a splendid tunnel or arch, affording a commodious passage from one part to the other; there are also, ample fields for those animals that do not require close confinement, to roam at large; and the entire establishment must be esteemed an object well worthy the attention and admiration of the traveller and naturalist.

I have, also, had a peep into the Tower, so renowned for secret deeds of cruelty and blood; and when conducted to the low dismal room, which had been the prison of the devoted Sir Walter Raleigh, and shown the block and axe which deprived the noble, dignified,

and high minded Mary, Queen of Scots, of life, a shudder ran through my frame that made me look with detestation on the figure of the cruel Elizabeth, seated, in the same hall, on her white palfrey, attired in all the blazonry of her gaudy court, with her page in green and gold, holding the bits. The walls of the hall were hung with shields, battle axes, spears, and similar relics of instruments, used by ancient nobles and warriors, who have, centuries past, mingled with the dust. Cannon bombs, and innumerable trophies of victories won by English conquerors, are displayed to the visiter. Here, is the great national armory, where pile upon pile, various war implements are stowed, with care, while the entire wall and arch of this spacious apartment, is decorated with burnished arms, hung in a manner comprising the most fanciful and tasty figures; here you may be shown the jewel tower, which contains the crown, state jewels, plate, &c. &c.; and here, also, you may be introduced to all the celebrated knights of the days of chivalry, who are mounted on their respective chargers, and clad, cap-a-pie, in mail; thus exhibiting the complete armor of the Knights Templars of the Crusades, all in the highest state of preservation; here was Richard Coeur De Lion, and other heroes, of Scott's celebrated tournament in Ivanhoe, and my eyes insensibly stole round in search of the fair Saxon Princess, Rowena, and the no less beautiful Jewess, Rebecca. But I will now briefly close, by informing you that my dear kind friends have procured me a number of letters, which will give me an introduction to the respectables of Van Dieman's Land;

and if nothing particularly favorable occurs, between this, and the first of July, I expect to sail for that country. * * *

Your Affectionate Sister,
MARIA WAIT.

LETTER XX.

LONDON, July 2, 1840.

My Dear Husband:

Although you will expect my arrival in Van Dieman's Land almost daily, after the receipt of my last, recent letter, kindly enclosed in a communication from Sir E. Parry to Sir John Franklin, accompanied by certificates of character, &c.; yet, from circumstances which have since transpired, fully explained by the following letters from the Honorable Charles Buller.* I have decided on returning to Canada, immediately;

*

"12 Lower Eaton st.,
"Sunday, June 14th.

"Dear Madam:

"I have just received Lord John Russel's answer to my application, in behalf of your husband. He informs me, that he has referred the matter to the Governor General of Canada. And I think, therefore, your best course is to return to Canada, and endeavor to get Mr. Poulet Thomson to make a report favorable to your husband. I think this would not be difficult. Indeed, from communications I have had with the Colonial office, I feel convinced, that the authorities there, feel that it would be right and politic, as speedily as possible, to release the prisoners. I have no doubt that a general amnesty will follow close on the accomplishment of the union which will clearly take place very soon; and I think, if at the same time, the Governor General recommends a pardon, there can be no doubt of its being granted. You should, I think, return to Canada, and not attempt to get up petitions, as you

and, although I have been ten months in England, pleading for your emancipation, I am yet unable to give you the glad tidings of its final consummation. Still, I am now, more than ever, encouraged to hope that I shall accomplish my purpose, and have the inexpressible joy of welcoming you, and your companions in suffering, to your native land not far hence, should your lives be spared by an indulgent Providence. I trust that your situation is much more comfortable than when your last letter was written, which I was most thankful to receive; though it brought the melancholy

talked of; but try with the Gov. Gen., to induce him to recommend a pardon. And this, of course, should be done without delay.

"In the mean time, I learn, at the Colonial office, that the Governor of V. D. L., has taken care that Mr. Wait, and his companions in misfortune, shall be well used. I think you may safely return to Canada, with the consciousness that you have done all that can be done here, and that you may hope the best. You may be sure that I will pay the utmost attention to any communication I may have from you, and do whatever may be required for the unhappy prisoners.

"I am, dear Madam,

"Your's faithfully,

"CHA'S BULLER, Jr.

"Mrs. B. Wait."

"12 Lower Eaton st.,

"Friday, July 3d.

"Dear Madam:

"I enclose you an answer, received yesterday, respecting Mrs. Chandler's petition. I also send you a letter for Mr. Paulet Thomson, in which I have strongly urged him to what he can for you.

"May your endeavors be successful, and your husband restored to you ere long

"I should advise you to go directly to the Gov. Gen., on arriving in Canada. I am sure he will be well disposed to you.

"Your's faithfully,

"CHARLES BULLER, Jr.

"May I also trouble you to take the small parcel which I enclose with this, to Mr. Paulet Thomson."

tidings of poor Van Camp's sudden death, it was the welcome harbinger of my dear Benjamin's welfare, who had been so mercifully raised from sickness, and preserved from death, in a foreign and penal country. What do we not owe to the Lord of mercy who thus supports us under the most severe of earthly afflictions? may our lives be more devoted to his service, and all trials blessed to us. "For this is the will of God concerning us even our sanctification." I was rejoiced to receive a letter from dear Thaddeus, who informs me that our beloved Augusta is well, and has not suffered one days illness since I left her; she is grandpa's pet, and says that "mama is gone to bring pa home from *Dieman's Land*;" may this indeed, my love, be prophetically true, and both of us restored to our tender lamb, and permitted to bring her up in the fear of our God—may she yet be a star in the diadem of Him who has so mercifully nursed her in his parental bosom.

I have made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins, who arrived with their family from Hobarttown on a visit to this country, a few weeks since. They are acquainted with Mr. Roberts, to whom yourself and Mr. Chandler have been assigned; and Mr. Hopkins has kindly offered to intercede with that gentleman in your behalf. Mrs. H. will, also, write Lady Franklin, with whom she is personally acquainted; all of which, I trust, will be of service to you, until you may be allowed to return. I can not but think that your captivity will be of short duration; and, as there are so many kind intercessions made for you, the cogency of your restraint, in that country, will

soon be comparatively slight; and you will, at least, enjoy local liberty. I was most happy to perceive, by an article in a Launceston paper, which Mr. Hopkins gave me, that your cases were not unnoticed by the press; it appealed powerfully to the Government, on your behalf; and remonstrated, in no measured terms, upon the inconsistency of political offenders from Canada, being placed upon a level, and mingled with the common criminals and felons, in that penal settlement.

I wrote you in my last, that I would endeavor to go out, if unsuccessful in my exertions here; which two weeks since, I fully expected to carry into effect, and, as I knew not to what I could best turn my attention for support, in that country, during the time that might possibly elapse, previous to your emancipation from servitude, I availed myself of the privilege, most kindly granted, and entered the model institution of the Home and Colonial Infant School Society, in which I have been much delighted as well as instructed, in the admirable system pursued, by this philanthropic association to instruct the children of the poor—the plan of which is, to inculcate the elementary truths of Christianity—to cultivate religious impressions—to call into action, by a system in which love and discipline are happily blended, the best feelings and affections of the heart; and, as far as possible, secure the formation of moral habits—to exercise the senses on suitable objects—to call the powers of observation into activity—and, indeed, to develop all the faculties of the infant mind, with the improvement of the bodily organs, by health-

ful and proper juvenile exercises. It is truly wonderful, that the little creatures are capable of the rapid improvement, which is evidently manifested, by their progress.

This humane institution is supported by voluntary contribution; and during the four years of its existence, has sent out four hundred and nineteen teachers, who have been carefully trained in the above wise principles, and had the benefit of tri-weekly lectures from able instructors, calculated to store their minds with a knowledge of all useful branches, and render them capable of discharging the arduous duties of their high and responsible vocation.

Had I gone to your sea girt prison land, I might have been a humble instrument, in the hands of God, by rendering service to the rising generation in that country of vice and consequent misery; but it is otherwise willed; and, although I did not, my dear, shrink from the idea of sharing your exile, still I deemed it prudent to take the advice of my friends—be guided by circumstances, and yet strive for your return; be assured, I have faith in the issue. Through the generous sympathy of many dear and kind friends in this country, a passage has been taken for America, and I expect to sail on the 7th inst. I shall, in all probability, be in Canada long ere this reaches you. But fear not my love, should my present hopes prove abortive, I will yet, with Divine permission, join you, in company with our dear child, whose society will far more enhance our happiness, though we may be severed for a greater length of time than our own reunion, and a

continued separation, by so great a distance, from the babe of our affections. Though I do trust you will, 'ere long, be on your homeward passage, in which hope I rest for the present, looking unto Him "who is able to do exceeding, abundant, above all we can ask or think, for the sake of our compassionate Redeemer and Advocate," as I well know there will not one more trial be laid upon us than is necessary for the purposes of sovereign mercy, then let us "run with patience, the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith"—that when our pilgrimage on earth is ended, we may have an abundant entrance ministered unto us, to the kingdom of our heavenly Father, where we shall go no more out for ever. Shall we not bear the will of God meekly, in view of the exalted glories of heaven? Our sufferings here, at the longest, can be but short, and then, oh how glorious *the conqueror's song*. *Cheer up, my dear; rise superior to surrounding circumstances; aim for the skies*, and the company of celestial intelligences shall be your rich reward. I sometimes fancy you a band of American missionaries, who have gone to disseminate light, principle, and morality among the degraded children of crime, who people Britain's penal colonies, and I doubt not you will sustain the standard of American character in a manner worthy the cause for which you suffer. I was told, by a member of the Government here, the other day, in a consolatory manner, "that yours was not a crime at which the Government felt indignant." Oh! thought I, how *superlatively consistent* would be that indignation, which

was aroused by the *crime* of panting for liberty, while in the coils of a deadly monster. May the example of every American who has been dragged to those polluted shores, tell upon that depraved community, and hourly proclaim the story of his noble and independent birth. Revered be the names of those who raised their arms in the cause of suffering Canada; how well have they shown that they duly appreciated the freedom gained for them by their illustrious ancestors, and asserted themselves the true scions of liberty, by active sympathy for their oppressed neighbors. May the God of liberty and mercy, hear their sighs; watch over their destinies, and raise them up friends, whose puissant exertions may speedily restore them to their own genial clime, whose soil is alone worthy the foot prints of freemen. May my feeble efforts indeed be of some service to them. It is for my country they suffer and not for their own; and could my puny arm send forth the mandate, how soon would they return. I do most sincerely hope, that the American people will unite with an energy commensurate to the awful necessity of their enslaved friends and fellow citizens in captivity. Though should there not be another voice raised, be assured, my dear husband, that I will not leave the field of duty while kind Providence aids me, in struggling for your emancipation, and a merciful God will deign to hear prayer for the unhappy prisoner. Mr. Hopkins most kindly takes charge of this letter, enclosing the one received from dear brother T., which I trust will be of some consolation and satisfaction to you, as it contains much interesting intelligence from Canada. I

also send you a box of books, which, I hope, will be acceptable and interesting to you. It will, with these letters, be forwarded to the Rev. J. Nesbit, of Hobart-town, from whom you will, doubtless, receive them in *safety*. I will write you immediately after my arrival in Canada, or, at least, as soon as I can learn the views of the Governor General, whose policy, I hope, may be in accordance with my most sanguine wishes. Until then I commend you to God, trusting he will graciously enable you to bear whatever indignities may be heaped upon you, with christian fortitude, and inspire you with the elevating consolations of hope and religion.

Your affectionate
MARIA.

LETTER XXI.

CANADA, October, 1840.

My Dear Benjamin:

Agreeable to the information contained in my last letter from London, I returned immediately to this country. It was, indeed most painful to me to leave the vicinity of the throne, 'ere I had fully effected your emancipation, which would, of course, be but a precursor of the same happy event to your companions in suffering. Still I hope, with the blessing of heaven, you will soon be enabled to make glad the hearts of those who now mourn your absence.

After learning the health of friends, and once more giving our dear child a mother's embrace, I hastened

to Toronto, that I might avail myself of the earliest opportunity of communicating with the Gov. General, who was expected there on a visit.

On reaching the Government House, I was informed that his Excellency was then engaged with Sir George Arthur; and that his time was so fully occupied, that it would not be possible to grant an interview; but "that he would be happy to receive any communications I might send up." I immediately addressed the following note of remonstrance to him:

TORONTO, 12th Sept., 1840.

His Excellency, the Gov'r Gen'l.

Sir: Agreeable to request, I herewith transmit to your Excellency, the letter and parcel with which I was favored, by the Hon. Charles Buller, of London, humbly trusting, that when your Excellency shall have learned the peculiar circumstances of my situation, that you may be pleased to grant me an interview.

I would beg leave to inform your Excellency, that I have spent the last year in England, in supplicating the mercy of the Crown, in behalf of a youthful and unfortunate husband, who was engaged in the insurrectionary movements of '38, and who is now suffering, from transportation to a distant and penal Colony.

I am happy, however, to inform your Excellency, that nothing could be more kind than the feelings manifested by her Majesty, her Ministers, and many of her house-hold, with whom I had the honor of corresponding on the subject.

I memorialized the Queen through the Sec'y of State, Lord Normanby, who received me very graciously, and expressed much sympathy in the case; and in answer to an application, in June last, to Lord John Russel, his Lordship was pleased to say, that the matter had been referred to your excellency, the Governor General of Canada.

I need hardly say, that I readily acquiesced in the advice of my warm hearted English friends, and returned to my native land, without delay, that I might lay the case fully before your Excel-

lency; and permit me to add, with no ordinary degree of hope, from a knowledge of the high character your Excellency so justly sustains in England, as well as in this country, where I trust the proper development of the present liberal policy, may indeed prove a bright era in the history of Canada, and prosperity and peace be the rich reward of your Excellency's superior government.

I have the honor to be, &c. &c.,

MARIA WAIT.

In this I enclosed my letters, and waited his answer, which was verbally given, through J. E. Small, Esq., who had kindly accompanied me; he informed this gentleman, that the home Government had referred the matter to him; and that he would give his attention to the subject, though at present he could do little more than recommend a lenient course in V. D. L., which he would at once do; seeming to imply that the result would be governed by the effect of the union. I did not accept this communication as a reply to my letter, and accordingly wrote him again on the subject, as follows:

TORONTO, 18th Sept. 1840.

His Excellency, the Gov'r Gen'l of Canada.

Sir: Not having been favored with an answer to my note of the 12th, I venture to beg that your Excellency will be pleased to pardon the liberty with which I do myself the honor of again addressing you, deeming that, but for the circumstance of your Excellency being in this Province on a visit, rather than business, and the consequent engagements pressing rapidly upon you, during your short stay, I should most assuredly have been answered; which, I think, your Excellency cannot hesitate to feel is my due, having returned from England for the express purpose of conferring with your Excellency, on the subject already made known; being strongly recommended to do so by the (I am happy to say) very respectable friends I made in England, who did not hesitate to assure me, that I should meet with, at least, a courteous recep-

tion from his Excellency, the Governor General of Canada, to whom Lord John Russel, in much kindness, informed me he had been pleased to refer the matter.

I do hope that your Excellency will, in compassion, spare me the most painful necessity of returning again to England, alone and unprotected, to urge my suit at the foot of the throne.

I beg leave, however, to say, that I am far from being insensible to the peculiar circumstances in which your Excellency is, at this moment, placed, in regard to the great political change about to take place in this country, under your Excellency's administration, that of the union of the Provinces, which necessarily requires time for maturity; and I would neither seek for promises, nor ask what your Excellency can not, upon fixed and generous principles of policy, grant; but could I be favored with an interview, I should deem myself most happy in being permitted, candidly and quietly, to confer with your Excellency on the subject. I can assure you, sir, you need be apprehensive of no violent outbursts of feeling, or what is commonly termed a *scene*; and which gentlemen are generally (perhaps properly) fearful of, when approached by females, in supplication, on subjects especially of the painful nature of the one which brings me to your Excellency for mercy; but two years and a half of mental agony, have so injured me to suffering and trial, that feeling has almost ceased to flow in its natural channel.

Should your Excellency yet condescend to see me, I will endeavor to wait upon you at Montreal, or any place you may be pleased to appoint; or should this be deemed worthy of a reply from your Excellency, the same will reach me at the Chippawa Post office. Trusting in your Excellency's kindness and humanity,

I have the honor to be, &c. &c ,

MARIA WAIT.

This brought the following document from the Government House in Lower Canada:

“Government House,

“Montreal, 30th, Sept. 1840.

“Madam:

“Your letter of the 18th September, has been submitted to the Governor General. and I am directed to express his Excellency's

regret, that you should have considered that your letter remained without a reply. His Excellency conferred with Mr. Small upon the subject, and requested that gentleman to assure you, that he would give the case of your husband, his early and attentive consideration.

"His Excellency now directs me to inform you, that after having closely examined the documents connected with this case, he regrets to say that he can not comply with your wishes, to their full extent; but he has informed the Secretary of State, that, in his opinion, after the expiration of a limited time, a ticket of leave may safely be granted to Mr. Wait, and every opportunity afforded him to regain a respectable footing in society, in the country in which he resides.

"I have the honor to be, Madam,

"Your obedient servant,

"THO. C. MURDOCK,

"Chief Secretary."

This concurring with the expressed disposition of Lord John Russel, will at least secure to you tickets of leave, under which you will be more at ease; and which I firmly believe to be an earnest of your final release; as there is every reason to infer that it will soon take place. The union will be proclaimed this winter, and there is little doubt of the Governor's acting in accordance with the wishes of the united Legislature, to whom I shall appeal, and whose influence I shall unquestionably have, in urging your restoration, and recommending a general amnesty, on the settlement of the government. There is much excitement on the subject of the union and the approaching Parliamentary election, which will take place soon after the proclamation. I have seen a number of those gentlemen who are likely to be the representatives in assembly, and they are united in the opinion, that Par-

liament will act in our favor, and recommend a general amnesty to the government. I have, therefore, to await the time when I can advantageously make another application on your behalf. I hope, at least, that these political experiments may be sufficiently satisfactory to induce a liberal policy toward all political offenders, and oblivate the imaginary necessity of delaying a full, complete, and general amnesty.

It seems to be the purpose of the Government, to pursue a more liberal course in Canada; and, indeed, the necessity of something to elicit the confidence of the people, is evidently obvious. Some are expecting benefit from a responsible government; others are looking for anarchy and confusion, while more are careless, and seem not to have formed even a vague idea of the matter. One thing is certain, however; the people are no longer afraid to whisper the fact, that grievances exist, and that the administration of government is corrupt and iniquitous. It is not *treason*, now, to be a *reformer*, which is an indication you perceive, of a change for the better; and, at least one step toward freedom, resulting from the rebellion.

Mr. Merritt has just enclosed me a letter from Sir John Franklin, acknowledging the receipt of your certificates of character, bearing Mr. M's recommendation. Sir J., professes his readiness to extend any indulgence in his power to you. This is evidence, positive, that those documents have been favorably noticed, and which I think, cannot fail to be of service to you, as the tone of the entire letter is kind and satisfactory. Our friends in England are ready to take

advantage of any change for your benefit, and exert their influence on the government there, for your speedy release. I think, therefore, we may safely indulge in the pleasures of hope.

Ever your's,
M. W.

LETTER XXII.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., Sept. 20, 1841.

My Dear Husband:

As you may suppose, I hailed the first meeting of the United Legislature with no ordinary degree of hope and anxiety, and consequently proceeded to Kingston, on the 18th July, to make the intended appeal. After consulting a number of members, I decided upon making a personal application to Lord Sydenham for your release, and petitioning the House to recommend a general amnesty for all political offenders. The latter could alone be done, by obtaining the signatures of the various constituencies to a memorial, embodying the prayer; and this, of course, would require time and attention. I accordingly prepared my petition, and sought an interview to present it; and while waiting his Excellency's pleasure, as to the time he could see me, I carried it to the Parliament house, where I succeeded most admirably, in obtaining the influence of the members—more than fifty of whom generously recommended my memorial to the Governor's favorable consideration—among them were Sir A. McNab, Col. Prince, and some of the Executive council.

His Lordship gave me a kind reception, complimented me highly upon "bringing the house of Assembly" with me, and said, he "did not at all wonder at it, as he would most freely add his signature to the number, was it consistent with the station he occupied in the country." I do believe that the recommendation will be sent out, and you, my dear, with others, return to the land of your nativity.

I left Kingston immediately after the interview, and in company with my brother G., spent four weeks in circulating the above named petition, praying for a free pardon to all implicated in the rebellion, and enclosed the same to Mr. Merritt, in the following letter.

"LOUTH, U. C., August 30, 1841.

"Dear Sir:

"I am most happy in the privilege of transmitting to you the enclosed petition, embracing, as it does, the wishes of a very respectable portion of your worthy constituents, as well as those of Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Thompson, and others, which I trust will meet, not only with the energetic support of their respective representatives, but with that of every friend of humanity in your honorable House, as it must be apparent to all, that it will be a politic measure, and one of which the whole country is desirous, being fraught with the most beneficial results. I can, indeed, assure you, that had time permitted, this petition would have borne to you the signatures of nearly the whole Province; and my only regret is, that I did not commence a month earlier, as the shortness of time has only allowed me to obtain the names of the most prominent individuals in each place where it has been offered; and I now hasten to forward it, hoping that the period has not elapsed, when it may be presented to the Assembly under favorable auspices.

"Sir, I have the honor to be

"Your's, most respectfully,

"MARIA WAIT.

"Wm. H. Merritt, Esq."

On the receipt of the above, the House addressed the Government on the subject; and on the 15th inst. Mr. Merritt enclosed me his reply, the purport of which is so far satisfactory, as his assurance that he would, at once, make known the wishes of the House to the home Govern^{ment}, and urge upon the Queen, in the communication, his own views, which were indulgent to the Canadian exiles, and consequently, in accordance with the feelings of the House.

Are not the grounds of my hope sufficiently encouraging to induce others to come and do likewise? Surely they desire the return of their exiled friends, and I *hope* they will exert themselves for their emancipation. * * * *

Adieu.

MARIA.

LETTER XXIII.

MONA VALE, near Ross, V. D. L.

Nov. 1841.

To — —,

My dear sir: I will now speak very briefly of the discovery, settlement, and appearance of this Island; then give a few statistical details, and close my correspondence, that is, such of it as may be deemed historical. However you may still expect occasional letters, filled, perhaps, with local matter that may interest and amuse you; yet such must be subject to the freaks of my fancy.

Just 200 years have elapsed since Mynheer Tasman first rubbed his eyes with delight at the sight of this small rock begirt spot of *terra firma*; and named it, in honor to his patron, the Governor of Dutch India, Anthony Van Dieman. He found no bays or harbors into which he could put, to shelter his ships from the storm that raged at the time; consequently sought safety in the open sea, where, according to his log, he found all calm and quiet—occasioning him to describe the Island, as one “accursed in the sight of the mariner, where the winds roared and raged; where waves foamed and lashed, and where lightnings glowed and flashed incessantly—a land of thunder, storm, fire and tempest—a coast rife with death, horror, and shipwreck!” This description deterred other navigators from visiting it for many years, and but little was known about V. D. L., until the close of the last century, when Capt. Cook, and others also, found it “a bleak, and inhospitable spot, often visited by hurricanes.”

Perhaps V. D. L., would never have been regarded worth inhabiting, for any other purpose than that to which it was devoted by the penal settlement of Botany Bay, now Sidney, viz: “a station for the condign punishment of their doubly convicted felons.” When such became the determination, Col. Collins, in 1804, was sent, with four hundred prisoners, and fifty marines to take and keep possession of it. He landed at the spot now occupied by Hobarttown, where he established his government, and began his erections. But many were the vicissitudes and the extremities of suf-

in a few days, many of the

fering he endured, before any part of their plans could be accomplished, so deplorable was the scarcity of natural fruit or food to sustain life. It was, therefore, two years before they had, for occupancy, a jail, a government house, a soldier's barracks, an inn, and a custom house—until which were constructed, all else was neglected. Kangaroo's flesh sold, at one period, for 36 cents per pound, notwithstanding the interior abounded with various species of this animal; but the colonists were deterred from pursuing them by a fear of the natives, who, although they had not, as yet, exhibited any savage propensities, were regarded, from the hideousness of their appearance, as "*semi demons*," being of a dark complexion, with a large woolly head, low squat figure, short but broad face, flat nose, high cheek bones, and a restless eye, living in a perfect state of nudity and filth; and being perhaps, as ignorant and destitute a race, as could be found on the face of the earth.

After three years of severe toil and destitution, Collins seems to have first entertained the idea of cultivating the soil, to test its capability of producing the necessary supply of bread stuffs. The result was flattering, and exaggerated reports brought fresh supplies of emigrants from New South Wales, and even England, as well as greater numbers of prisoners, as general laborers for the government and the settlers; who performed all the work without pay, or any kind of remuneration, save a small portion of coarse food, and a bad supply of clothing. When agriculture was found not only available, but efficient; it was entered

into with such avidity, and to so great an extent, that produce became a drug; and, therefore, other employments were sought, and other means of investment found, in the gradual introduction of stock. Another discovery, also tended greatly to the necessity of adopting this new source of wealth. The soil, when worn by three or four successive crops, utterly failed in realizing the hopes of the cultivator; consequently the great numbers drawn hither from England, by the exaggerated reports, industriously circulated, filled with golden dreams, found themselves frustrated in their expectations, and could only resort to the alternative of grazing, without however, any regard to the growth of wool, which did not, until a few years past, become an article of commerce.

As soon as Van Dieman's Land was pronounced, by the British government, open for emigrants, every sort of inducement was held out in England, to incite a tide thither. The concentration of wealth was desirable; therefore, an acre of land, selected by the settlers at will, was offered for every pound Sterling, in money or property, brought into the country—every article being appraised according to its value here, and a schedule by the owner always taken, as proof of possession. The consequence was, the location to single individuals, of immense tracts of land—for instance, the estate I now date from, consists of 50,000 acres, and has, at this time, a stock of 14,000 sheep—1,500 head of horned cattle, and seven hundred horses; but to return. This of course, had the effect of erecting a state of aristocratic independence,

little inferior to England's lordlings; and these men, not paying any thing for labor, could not fail in realizing vast amounts of local property; and, consequently, becoming nominally wealthy; but to be brief, one governor supplanted another, until the reins fell into the tyrannical hands of our *ci-devant* Governor Arthur, who drew them so *taughtly*, that many of the prison population fled to the woods—choosing to seek a precarious existence by plunder and robbery, or an unmolified death, amid rocks and gum trees, rather than submit to his high handed control. * * *

[The consequences of Arthur's despotism, are forcibly detailed in the following note, given me by a gentleman who had acted during many years in Hobarttown, for the American consulate, of Sidney, where I became acquainted with him; and who now resides in Boston. On a visit to the west he called upon me in Buffalo, last autumn; and after hearing some of my manuscript, handed me this note, which I substitute for this part of the original letter.]

“Buffalo, November, 1843.

“My Dear Sir:

“I desire to assure you, that I fully corroborate all you say, in the manuscript you read me, relative to the government and island of V. D. L., where I resided for twelve years. I was perfectly acquainted with the administration of Col. George Arthur, and himself, particularly. During his governorship of thirteen years, in V. D. L., he signed the death warrant for *fifteen hundred and eight persons*, only *eight* of whom were saved from the gallows, by being sent to a penal settlement, and doomed to a life of toil, in irons, far worse than death. I have seen nine hanging on the same scaffold at the same time, and fourteen in one week. I heard Judge Montague, while on the bench, charging a military jury, and

the Attorney General, E. McDowal, while pleading for the crown, say, that '*any number* of witnesses like these, [such as were then giving testimony,] could be procured for a *bottle of rum*, or a *half crown* each, to bring home to any person in the Colony, any crime that might be laid to his charge.' I also saw two natives executed, after having undergone a mock trial, without the least consciousness of what would be the result of what was going on. * *

'I have the honor to be, My Dear Sir,

'Your's, Obediently,

'JESSE MORRELL.

'Mr. B. Wait.'

These fifteen hundred executions took place on a scaffold he had erected in sight of his own dwelling; and, oh! what a sumptuous treat it must have been for his hateful soul, as he took his morning airing upon his piazza, to have gloated upon those distorted bodies, as they hung suspended from the "lofty gallows" for the whole day, a spectacle for every eye. The executions invariably took place at a very early hour, and the first intimation to the citizens was a sight of the corpses swinging in the winds. I must leave it for you to imagine what the crimes of these victims were, for I cannot tell; neither could many of the citizens, for secrecy was an essential part of his summary government.

These arbitrary proceedings were not the only bloody marks of his ensanguined administration; for the range he permitted the convict shepherds and stock-keepers, resident on the interior *runs*, to give to their brutal, diabolical passions, in their intercourse with the seemingly harmless aborigines, together with the insult offered to them by a formal execution of two of their number, produced a horrid scene of savage bar-

barity on the part of the native, and of exterminating fury on the part of Arthur. Various plans were resorted to by the Governor, to effect his purposes, against the lives and liberty of these foresters; and so effective were they, that out of the six thousand who were known to roam at large, over the mountains and rocks of V. D. L., in search of the game of the forest, or to dig the native bread* on its plains, only eighty now remain; and they are prisoners, cooped up on a small island, where they are continually dwindling away, so that a few years will entomb the last of the Tasmanian natives, and the race will live no more, save on the page of the historiographer, or in the memories of those in whose breasts their wrongs have excited a kind sympathy, or a disgust for that power which deals treacherously with the aborigines of *every* clime it visits.

The system of police established by Col. Arthur, is managed on the principle of "set a rogue to catch a rogue," and has been mainly effective in preventing extended connexions for plunder, and in bringing to the gallows, and into other punishments, thousands of innocent beings. When this Governor was recalled, bonfires, the firing of cannon, guns, and various other demonstrations of joy, were kept up for ten successive days and nights, while a respectable delegation was sent to read to him an address, expressive of the most unbounded pleasure, for the final delivery from his long continued mal-administration.

*A sort of ball that is found in the earth, without vegetation, to the size of from a quart bowl to that of a man's head, possessing, when steamed, nearly the flavor of boiled rice.

Arthur was succeeded by the noted navigator, Sir John Franklin, a very old man, whose imbecility gives the designing members of his government, an opportunity for riding, "rough shod," over the citizens. But here I ought to draw the line of charity; or rather, of oblivion; for, of late, he has manifested an uncommon feeling of kindness and solicitude for me, incited to such good wishes by the numerous papers sent him from England, through friendly feelings for Mrs. Wait, by very many generous individuals, pleading for my welfare. He has personally informed me of his esteem and determination to render me every favor in his power, when Mrs. Wait arrives. He has spoken of having received communications from William H. Merritt, Esq., and has written him, in reply, that he would grant me every indulgence, consistent with his duty, as Governor. I certainly feel thankful to him, but more so to Mr. Merritt, to whom I beg you will tender the best wishes of a sincerely grateful heart.

The prospects of this Colony are now getting very bad; for the year 1840, there were Gazetted, on an average, eighteen bankruptcies for each week. Indeed these are times, all over the world, that will try the foundation of every man's wealth. Perhaps it is right, for too long has false capital and nominal riches had the ascendancy. The speculative mania must yield to sober steady industry, and real wealth, before affairs can again assume a healthy and prosperous aspect here or elsewhere.

The commerce of Hobarttown has, of late years, been of considerable importance to America, as the

Bostonians have found a ready market, yearly, for several ship loads of flour, tobacco, cigars, New England rum, timber, cabinet ware, dried fruits, staves, biscuit, and almost every Yankee commodity, excepting *wooden hams*, *wooden cheese*, and such *goods*. American pork, beef, butter, and cheese, meet a ready sale, much advance of the New York and Boston prices. I have eaten flour from barrels bearing the Genesee, Rochester, and Michigan, brands, 18,000 miles from the place of its manufactory, bought at nine dollars; but am sorry to say, I never found it in a good state of preservation, being always sour or musty, perhaps rendered so by sweating in crossing the "*line*" or by being too closely packed.

The free population of the whole island, numbers about 50,000, of whom near twenty thousand were transported convicts, but now are free from servitude or indulgence. The amount of convicts, both male and female, who are still prisoners, no better than slaves, is about 22,000; and arrangements have been made to bring to the colony 10,000 more, during the year of 1842, with an equal number of free. The proportion of female convicts, is about one third; and of the free about one half. Thus, we have a population for V. D. L., of free males, 33,500—of free females, 16,500—of male prisoners, 14,700—of female convicts, 7,000—making in the aggregate, 72,000 inhabitants, or human beings, for 22,000 cannot be termed *inhabitants*, that is, if we attach any other meaning to the word, than "mere dwellers." We also see, that 42,000 of the persons on the island were transported thither, be-

ing convicted of crimes of some shade. Dr. Ross (the publisher of an almanac and government paper in Hobarttown, for a number of years,) says, "they are criminals, selected from the worst offenders at home; not only the worst characters that England could produce in a year, but they are actually the worst that can be taken in an accumulation of several years; amounting to no less than 220,000." And add to this statement, the fact of V. D. L. yet remaining a receptacle for New South Wales offenders—doubly convicts—a set of characters, it must be presumed, not very likely to shake off habits of immorality, intemperance, crime and gross venality. Imagine for a moment the extent of this mass of crime and infamy, and then say what you think of the state of society it must engender. But this is not all; I must still speak of the female portion of this number of beings. The disproportion of females to the males, induced the government to instruct the commissioners for emigration, to send out a further supply, between the ages of sixteen and thirty. A ship was therefore taken up, and crowded with two hundred women, the majority of whom were indigent, unprincipled wretches, taken from the brothels and streets of London. Other ships followed from Dublin, Cork, Liverpool and Edinburgh, freighted in like manner; and, besides, a free passage was provided for all the wives and families of prisoners who had been in the colony at least a sufficient time to become acquainted with the mode of labor there. Here, then, we will find, that, of the sixteen and a half thousand free females, at least two thirds were, originally, but

little better than the transported convicts. I have been acquainted with a number of these bounty emigrant women, and I fain would close my eyes against the truth, and restrain my pen from writing it, but am constrained to say, what I have repeatedly heard, from the best individuals here, "that female virtue is rarely known in Van Dieman's Land." God preserve us from the contaminating influence of the society amid which we are unhappily thrown! must be the prayer of all true Americans who know our situation here.

I remain, dear sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

[For a concise and brief description of the surface of the country and its adaptation to agriculture, I would point the reader to the map I have been enabled to embody, and the following brief extracts from a letter written late in 1841 to Mrs. Wait.]

LETTER XXIV.

MOUNT SEYMOUR, Sept. 1841.

My Dear Maria:

* * * * * Van Dieman's Land is a small, rock bound, mountainous island, exhibiting a surface of 24,000 square miles, or fifteen millions of acres, between the parallels of 41 deg. 20 min. S., and the meridians of 144 deg. 40 min. and 143 deg. 20 min. E., while its greatest extent is 210 by 150 miles. It lies directly south of New-Holland, and is divided from it by a narrow channel, called Bass Straits. Indeed, it was, long after its discovery, considered the south extremity of that vast island or continent New Holland; and not until the latter part of the last century,

was it known to be a separate island. Hobarttown, (now fashionably written Hobarton,) is situated on the river Derwent, in the south-eastern part of the island, about forty miles from the sea. There are two passages by which this river may be entered, separating fifteen miles from Hobarttown. The eastern is the safest and less difficult, being nearly straight, very wide, and devoid of rocks and shoals, while the other is very tortuous, full of rocks and banks, though wide and seemingly easy of access. The river, at the town, affords as fine, safe and commodious a harbor as there is, perhaps, in the world, abounding with fine fish.

Hobarttown lies spread over a square mile of rising ground, and is well located for business, and romantic views. It is beautifully laid out, with streets intersecting at right angles, and from its center, may be had a full view of the river, harbor, shipping and docks, with the bustle of men and drays continually engaged upon them, enlivening the scene, and giving it an important appearance. But, alas! here to darken the picture, near the dock, you cannot but observe a mass of beings, dressed in magpie (black and yellow) clothes, with chains coupling the legs together, digging down the bank and carting the earth away to the water's edge, to form new docks and more extended warehouses. In one of the streets near by, you also observe another of those magpie companies, sitting upon piles of small stone with a small hammer in the hand, breaking them for macadamizing the streets.

The extended view across the Derwent, presents a prospect of bold desolation. Nothing is seen but hills on hills, rising in quick succession, one above the other, clad to their summits with tall dusky topped trees, with white stems, which give them a forbidding appearance. Behind the town, is Mount Wellington, with a bold and bluff front, rearing its head to the very clouds, four thousand feet above the level of the sea, apparently overhanging the town, though three miles distant. From this mountain flows a murmuring rivulet, turning, in its course, several flour mills, and some other machinery, while it supplies the only fresh water the inhabitants use.

The town contains a number of very imposing edifices, consisting principally of churches, with a few public buildings. I should

imagine there were seven thousand free inhabitants; I cannot speak from knowledge, 1841 is the first year an accurate census has been attempted, and it meets a decided opposition, as it is done with a view to taxation—yet seven thousand is the computation of a number of the best judges.

The animals consist, principally, of the kangaroo and opossum species, with a few others; and the birds, of a vast variety of the parrot and cockatoo family, with the magpie, *juckass*, (a singing bird,) the emu, (very much like the ostrich.) and the large black swan, (the most beautifully plumaged bird I ever saw.)

The land on the west bank of the Derwent, for fifty miles above Hobarttown, is adapted to cultivation only for a narrow strip of four miles in width: and this will scarcely produce sufficient to pay the cultivator. The soil has become so dry and arid, that the observer, if he has never passed but in the dry season, cannot suppose there is any vegetation whatever—every thing being parched up. Indeed, during the harvest months, nothing but the “grain ripened for the sickle,” is apparent; and that has a sickly appearance. This narrow strip is bounded by towering hills, and lofty mountains in the distance, with occasional small vallies between, containing from five to ten thousand acres, which afford wild *runs* for sheep and cattle, and a small spot for a farm location. These are not very contiguous to each other—an isolated farmstead being often ten miles over a mountain from any other.

The east side of the Derwent presents to the eye, nothing but imposing mountains, covered with forest trees of the *Eucalyptis* species, commonly called black and white gum, stringy bark, and peppermint, with the banksia kind, consisting of wattle, banksia, oak, (male and female,) honey suckle, blackwood, and cherry.*

Not more than two-fifths of the whole island can be considered arable land, and much of that is of inferior soil, never producing any crops without irrigation, for which much of the country is tolerably well situated—there being large lakes or reservoirs on

*What this tree takes its name from, is the fact of its bearing a sort of cherry, that is about the size of a common field pea, perfectly transparent, with the pit, (a hard stony substance, as large as the fruit,) on the outward extremity, where, with our cherry, the blossom commonly hangs.

the tops of the highest mountains, seemingly placed there with a design, for future irrigation. It was a custom with the natives to set fire to the woods in every part of the island, during the dry season, which ran through with the utmost rapidity, driving the kangaroo before it to a concentrated point, where they could be taken with the greatest facility—when the opossum, too, could be picked up any where within the burnt districts, ready roasted—affording a long supply of food for the natives, while the fire, hollowing out the trunks of the largest trees, furnished huts ready constructed, without trouble, and gave to the forest the singular appearance of a group of “dancing trees,” or the “largest gums standing on legs.”

These fires have consumed all the small timber and underwood, which gives the natural vegetation (weeds and a sort of wire-grass with a fuzzy head, called kangaroo grass) an opportunity for springing up, and upon which the sheep and cattle subsist. Nothing grows naturally to any degree of luxuriance. This can be inferred from the fact of its requiring two acres for the support of one breeding ewe. The soil, when in its virgin state, yields abundantly, for the three first crops; but successive ones are wholly failures. Clover and English grass never grow exuberantly except on irrigated land. Potatoes are produced in considerable plenty, but in the midland districts, are often cut off by the early frosts. Wheat, also, is frequently blasted by the frosts, when in bloom. I have seen a large field of wheat, reflecting the rays of the evening sun in splendid healthiness, and blooming vigor, giving hopes of an abundant harvest; but that same field, in the next morning's sun, exhibited a blackened aspect, while the mid-day heat turned the whole to a perfect white. The scythe was immediately put in, and what would have been a fine crop, in a short half month, was then but a whitened field of poor fodder. Oats and barley form the principal products, and seldom fail; turnips, mangelwurzels, and rape, are sown on low or irrigated soils, with success.

Originally, the valleys between the numerous mountains, were filled with lagoons, or small fresh water lakes, some ten or twelve miles in circumference, without any apparent outlets. They were natural reservoirs for the waters, rushing from the hills, with

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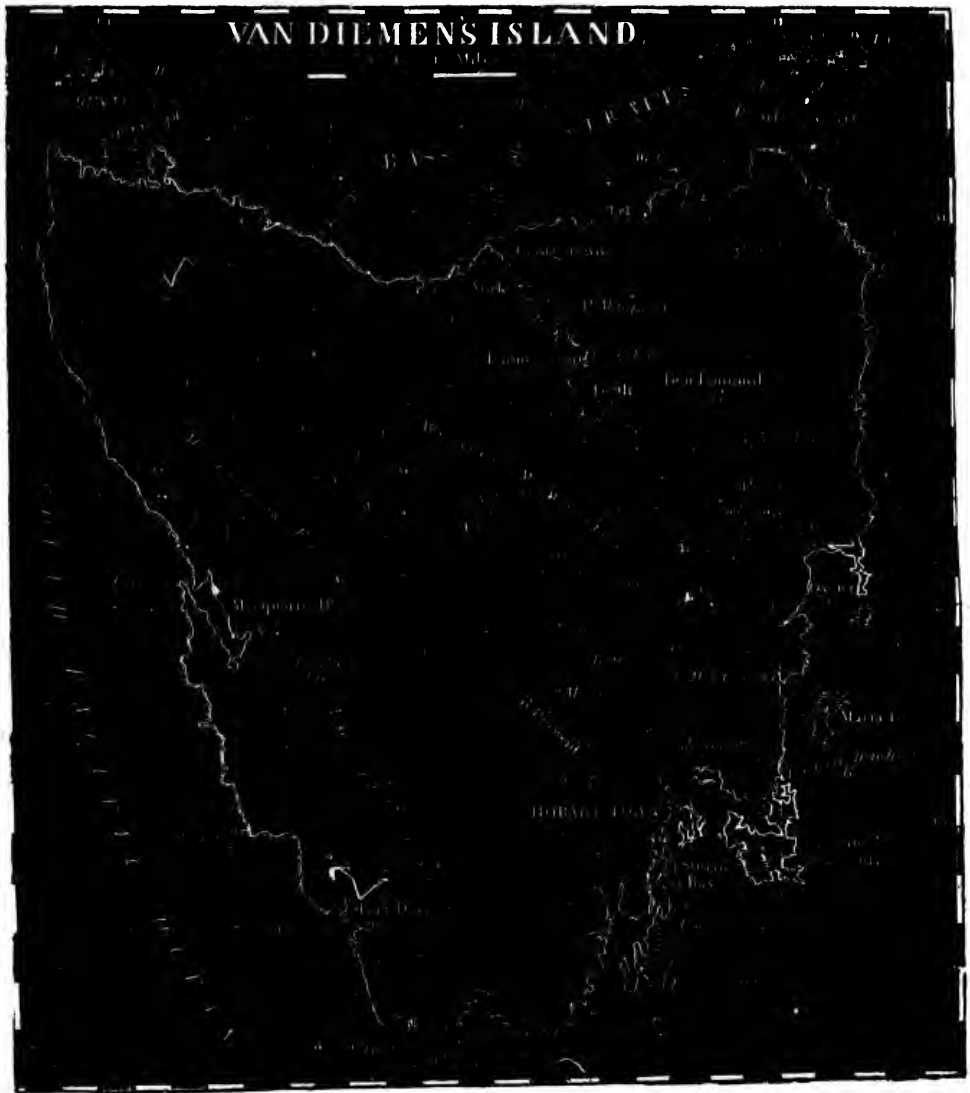
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An accurate Map, engraved expressly for "Letters from V. D. L."

which they are surrounded. But what astonishes all the naturalists who have visited the Island within the last five years, is the total disappearance of all the water from the most of these reservoirs, without any perceptible cause or visible passages for discharge, while the lakes on the mountains remain full.

There are a few rivers of considerable magnitude rising in the interior, and gradually increasing until they fall into the sea, navigable only a short distance from their mouths; and some secondary ones, rising amid the hills and running, with a tortuous course, through the interior, sometimes with impetuosity between two parallel hills, then losing themselves for miles over vast flats without channel, fertilizing them to be again collected for an egress by the near approach of two collateral ridges. At last, after a circuit of many miles, they find their way to the "greedy sea," but little larger than where they first originated. These are always dry during the warm seasons, except in small pools, which the stock breeder is compelled to dig in their beds, to keep a supply of water on his run.

All parts of the country appear to have been visited, formerly, by these mountain streams, which have, seemingly, disjoined the hills that otherwise would have formed extensive chains, connected throughout the Island. There are two extended ranges, called the Eastern and Western, running parallel to each other across the country; while hundreds of inferior mounts rear their heads in mimic grandeur on either side, and between them, as if to rival their neighbors, if not in noble magnificence and bold appearance, at least in scenic beauty and diversity of character. A more strikingly magnificent spot, as viewed from Mount Seymour, where I now stand, 500 feet above the level of the sea, could not be found in any country. * * *

I am at this height, on a pic-nic party; and while others are enjoying the joke, the bottle, and laughter, I amuse myself more rationally, by describing to you, my love, the scenes, a view of which would, if you were present, produce enthusiastic delight; but now all is steril, and enjoyment almost a blank. * * *

Affectionately your's,

B.

CONCLUSION.

In closing this volume, I fain would name and do honor to the benevolent Americans who delivered me from the horrors of slavery, but am compelled to pass slightly over the affair, for fear of ill consequence to my benefactors, who are again on a whaling voyage, and, most probably, will visit the same port for refreshments; when, should the authorities be aware of the fact, they would be liable to a heavy penalty; for, under the present harbor laws, "the master of any vessel, making a port of V. D. L., under whatever pretext, must report every circumstance connected with her cargo, and muster all her men in presence of a harbor master, who will visit her. * * *

Also, he shall make the day of sailing known, so that a District constable, with his *posse*, may visit the ship and search her thoroughly, with a view to prevent the escape of prisoners on ship board; who will remain until the anchor is tripped, and the sails shook out, when the papers shall be given to the master, and the vessel to the pilot, who will see her beyond the heads before dismissing her. * * *

And further, should any fugitive be found secreted, by the knowledge of the master, the vessel shall be detained until he shall have paid a penalty of fifteen hundred pounds sterling; otherwise she shall be forfeited and sold." * * *

These laws are, indeed, so strict, that but very few ever succeed in such attempts at escape; yet many try it, not, however, by the knowledge of the master. Notwithstanding the almost impossibility of getting away, Mr. Chandler and myself, both being employed on one farm, had early formed the design of flying from our prison, at the first opportunity; but did not very soon find ourselves properly situated for it. In August, of 1841, as before re-

lated, we received the ticket of leave, with which we were enabled to change our residence without suspicion, and lay by funds against a time of need; we were, therefore, ready to take advantage of the intelligence communicated, by newspapers, of there being, in the port of Hobart, several American ships; among whom, we hoped, one might be found, who possessed sympathy sufficient to assist us in quitting the island. With that view, Mr. C. procured a "pass" for ten days absence, and proceeded to town, where he was not disappointed in his trust to the warm hearted American seamen. He made the arrangements, and returned; when certain circumstances enabled us to be absent for two weeks without exciting mistrust.

I therefore went direct to the police office and obtained a "pass" for Hobart, where we spent Christmas in safe seclusion; and soon after, hiring a small whale boat, in which, under the disguise of a party for fishing, (no one taking us for prisoners) we put to sea, for the purpose of evading the consequences of the strict "harbor laws," with the spot designated, where we could be found; yet it was not until after we had been tossed about for several days, in danger, destitution, and extreme anxiety, that the *proper ship picked us up "in distress!"* and afforded us comfortable berths in the cabin, where we found genuine American hospitality reigning; and, favored by a kind Providence, we were, after seven months, permitted to hail, with unsurpassed delight, the gladsome shores of free America—ever an asylum for the oppressed. I found a generous welcome, amid the owners of the ship, and the friends of the Captain and first officer. The latter a gentleman of Bristol, R. I., from pure benevolence, accompanied me to the falls of Niagara, and "felt unalloyed pleasure, in presenting the long absent and lately emancipated exile, to the open arms of an overjoyed family, after near four years absence."

Over the circumstances of our meeting I will draw the curtain of silence, and leave the fancy of the reader to portray it, and then say, I imagine his picture short of the real—while I tender the most unbounded gratitude to all who aided in my flight, and those who have generously ministered to the aid and comfort of my wife, in her exertions, and my child, in her bereavement, during my absence.

After arriving, I found that a Mr. Gemmel had likewise made his happy exit from V. D. L., a month after our escape, but had arrived a month before us. He ascribes his good fortune to the liberty he obtained with the ticket of leave, which in a handsome card to the public, he attributes to the exertions of Mrs. Wait.

Now, in conclusion, I would say to those who choose to read these letters, that, by having already transcended the bounds I had proposed, by upwards of fifty pages of matter, that will no doubt, be more interesting, I have been restrained from doing proper justice to a description of the country, and am under the necessity of breaking off rather abruptly; yet I would intimate, that, at some future day, I may publish some fugitive sketches, with the minute details of my escape—occurrences on my passage home—chasing and taking whale—falling in with icebergs, gales, storms, and consequent shipwreck—incidents during a residence of a month in South America, amid fairy scenes that baffle description—calms on the equinoctial line, and thrilling anecdotes of a whaler's incidental life; none of which could have been embodied here, as they are, of themselves, more than sufficient for a volume of equal extent.

1 Jan 57.

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